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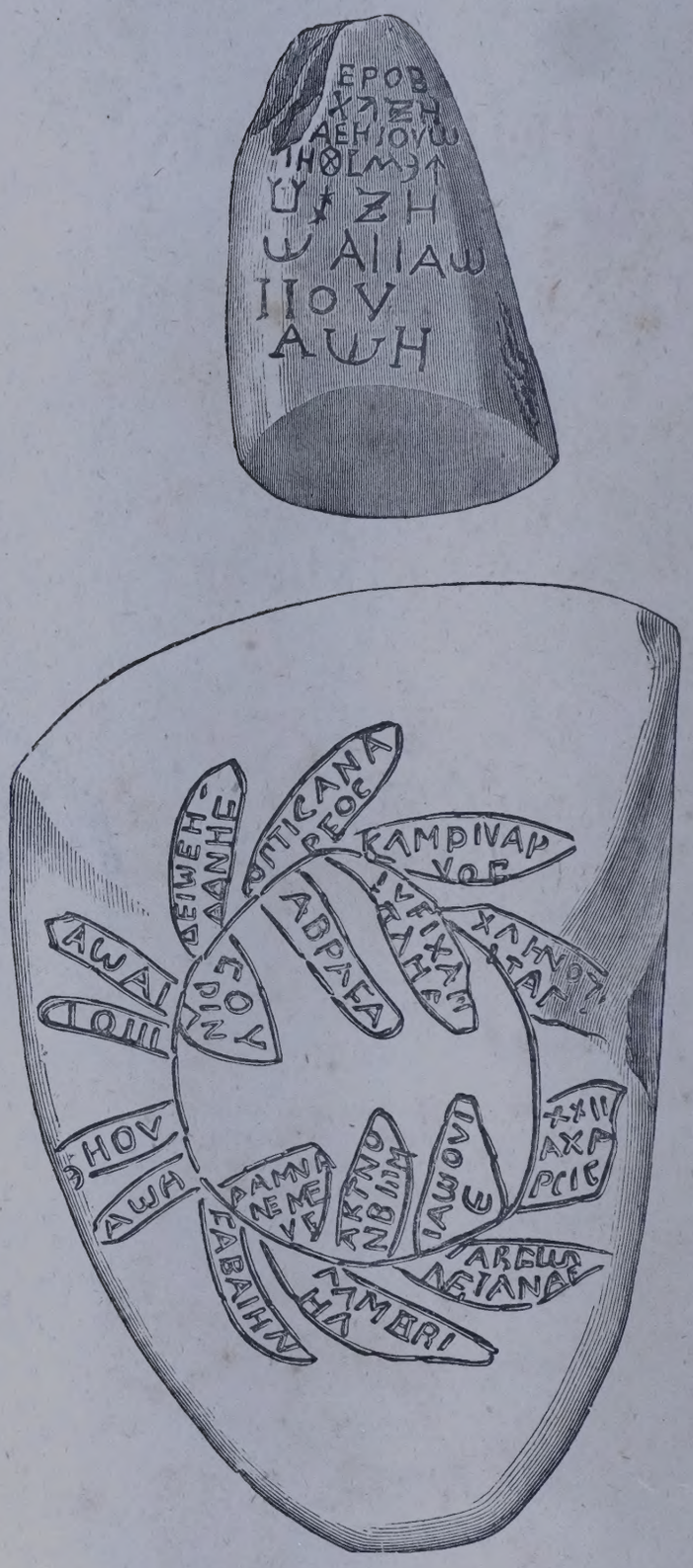

CERAUNIA OF GREEN JADE, CONVERTED INTO A GNOSTIC TALISMAN.

(*See page* 197.)

THE GNOSTICS

AND

THEIR REMAINS,

ANCIENT AND MEDIÆVAL.

BY

C. W. KING, M.A.

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"Nam veluti pueri trepidant atque omnia cæcis
In tenebris metuunt, sic nos in luce timemus
Interdum nilo quæ sunt metuenda magis quam
Quæ pueri in tenebris pavitant, finguntque futura."

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PREFACE.

When this work first appeared, three-and-twenty years ago, it became at once an object of unmerited abuse, and of equally unmerited praise. Small divines mistaking it for an insidious attempt to overthrow opinions "as by law established," *spurted* at it with pens dipped in the milk of the Gospel; whilst, under the very same hallucination, "Friends of Light" lauded it to the skies—either party equally ignorant both of the subject, and of the purpose of my labours. One noted *Zoilus* (whose recollections of Homer would seem to be of the same *deeply-marked* nature as Ensign Blifil's) is disgusted at my citing "Aidoneus" as a title of the God of the Shades; another is astonished at my ignorance in calling Bardanes a *Persian*, whereas he was a native of *Pontus;* not understanding that my argument was equally valid in spite of the mistake—Pontus being originally a province of the empire of Darius, and what is more to the purpose, the actual focus whence Mithraicism diffused itself over the Roman world.

A still greater cause of outcry against the book was my presuming to lay presumptuous hands upon the Sacred Ark of Masonry, and openly express my opinion that the "Free and Accepted" of these times have no more real connexion with the ancient *Craft*, out of whose terms and forms, like fig-leaves, they have stitched together *aprons*, wherewith to cover the real nakedness of their pretension, than the Italian *Carbonari* of Murat's day had with the trade of *charcoal burners*, whose baskets were borrowed for the President's throne. King Hiram's skull gnashed his teeth with rage within the *cista mystica;* and one *valiant* young Levite of the course of Abia,

proceeds thus logically to confute all my assertions: "Athelstan built a church: he could not build without masons; *argal*, Athelstan was the founder of Masonry in England.

But enough of this; the same treatment is necessarily in store for the present edition; it must look for

"Verbera, carnifices, robur, pix, lamina, taedae."

The one reviewer of its predecessor who exhibited any acquaintance with the literature of the subject, felt himself (from his position) "in duty bound" to qualify his praise by passing the summary judgment "that I had displayed in the work more of the spirit of a Gnostic than of a Catholic Christian." This sentence, intended for *condemnatory*, I accept as the highest praise that could be given to my labours—taking γνωστικός in its strict sense of "one addicted to knowledge"; and who therefore studies the history and remains of any opinion for the sole purpose of understanding the truth; and not for the sake of demonstrating the Truth can only exist under *one* defined form.

Let me now proceed to state how, in the present edition, I have endeavoured still further to deserve the appellation attached to me by the good-natured *Aristarchus*. My Treatise was the only one upon Gnostic Archaeology (for Dr. Walsh's little book scarce deserves the name) that had appeared since Chiflet's admirable "Apistopistus" (1617);—Matter, in his 'Histoire Critique du Gnosticisme (1827), an excellent analysis of the doctrines of the Gnosis, doing nothing for its monuments, beyond republishing, on a reduced scale, the engravings of the "Apistopistus." The only sources of information accessible to me at the time of writing that edition were the same as those drawn upon by Matter before me, namely the treatises of *Irenaeus* and *Epiphanius*. In the interval, I have become acquainted with, and, in order thoroughly to master, have made complete translations of, two recently discovered works that throw much light upon many difficult questions in this investigation. The one is the 'Refutation of all Heresies,' ascribed either to Origen or Hippolytus; its author being intimately acquainted with the doctrines which he holds up for

detestation, or for ridicule; and (what makes his criticisms of far higher value to students of the present day) illustrating them by copious extracts from the then so extensive heretical literature, soon to be completely exterminated by the triumph of the "orthodox" Faith.

The other aid is the "Pistis-Sophia," sole survivor of the once numerous family of *Gnostic Gospels;* but fortunately the most important of them all for our purpose, and the very one for whose escape (in its Coptic disguise) the archæologist ought to feel most grateful to the ignorance of the destroyers. For, whereas the other Gnostic teachers appear (as Hippolytus loves to point out) to build up their systems upon the lines of various Grecian philosophies, the "Pistis-Sophia" makes known to us what were the deepest secrets of the so celebrated Egyptian Mysteries, which are identical with those of the Rabbinical Kabbala, the only alteration being that of putting them into the mouth of Scripture personages, in order to adapt them to the prevailing change of ideas. This book, therefore, from its very nature supplies a kind of elucidation of contemporary monuments not to be found elsewhere, for the Christian Fathers discuss only the *doctrines* of their adversaries, not condescending to notice their application to the uses of everyday life. It is the latter point that gives such interest to the "Pistis-Sophia"—we gain from it the whole category of *Holy Names*, of such talismanic virtue; the powers and titles of the actual genii, the constitution of the soul; and its state after death. But what is yet more curious, the "Pistis-Sophia" exhibits the leading principles of the Kabbala already established, and applied to the demonstration of the highest truths in exactly the same manner as these principles were used by the heresiarch, Marcus, in the third century. And here it may be remarked parenthetically, that no one really acquainted with the history of religious opinions, can for a moment imagine that Marcus (a born *Jew*, be it remembered) was the first *inventor* of the wondrous machinery which he used in the development of his system, and the 'Manifestation of Truth,'—he did but apply to a new purpose the rules that he found already established as authoritative in the Rabbinical

schools. For in Religion there is no "new thing"; the same ideas are worked up over and over again; the gold in the *sovereign* of to-day may first have circulated in the new-coined *stater* of Crœsus.

Last, in point of time, but equally valuable with any of the fresh sources that have served me for the completion of this work, must I gratefully acknowledge the oral teachings of Rabbi Dr. Schiller-Szinessy—that unchanged representative of the Gamaliels of old—at whose feet I have sat for many years, listening to his exposition of the "Holy Zohar." Whatever may be the date of the *present* form of that transcendental development of the *Torah*—no one but an *inverted* Jew, totally unread in the *Greek* historians of the Gnosis, can fail to perceive that its principles and traditions are the very same as those taught in the schools of Babylon and Tiberias at the time when Simon Magus and Justinus studied there.

During the many years that have slipped by since its first publication, I have from time to time re-cast and re-written the entire Treatise, incorporating with the former contents whatever fresh information, reading, or chance, might throw in my way. In the same interval, two other works upon this subject have made their appearance. Dean Mansel's 'Gnostics' is a well-written and accurate summary of all that the Greek Fathers have left us upon the doctrines of the various sects; but, as the book is evidently intended for the use of theological students alone, the author has regarded his subject from a strictly *professional* point of view; totally ignoring the archæological side of the question (with which I am chiefly concerned), as being altogether foreign to the purpose for which he wrote.

On the other hand, Dr. Ginsburg's 'The Kabbala: its Doctrines, Development, and Literature,' possesses not only the merit of a lucid exposition of the most abstruse of all *Theosophies*, as contemplated in the shape to which it has been brought by the refining subtlety of successive generations of *Rabbins*—but will be found an invaluable guide to all who attempt the interpretation of talismanic inscriptions. For example, the Hebrew *radicals*, which express the Names of the *Sephiroth*, are to be discovered in the strings of Greek

consonants, now dumb for want of vowels, which have hitherto baffled the ingenuity of every reader.

There seems reason for suspecting that the Sibyl of *Esoteric* Buddhism drew the first notions of her new religion from the analysis of the *Inner Man*, as set forth in my first edition. I may therefore promise to myself the gratitude of those "clear spirits" (the Miltonian phrase) who are busying themselves "by searching to find out God," for now making known to them a still more profound theosophy, whose revelations definitely settle hardest problems relating to our mental nature, and the world beyond the grave. Investigators of the same order as the *Esoteric Buddhists* will find here a Gospel ready made to their hand—so full of great truths, so original in its conceptions, that it would seem to flow from no human source; and must carry conviction of its divine origin to every mind that shall be adapted by its nature for the reception of the *good seed*.

In conclusion, I must express my grateful acknowledgments of the services of my indefatigable friend, Mr. S. S. Lewis, Fellow of Corpus Christi College; but for whose persuasion, and negotiations with the publishers, these pages would never have seen the light. Not merely this, but he has enabled me to overcome an apparently insurmountable difficulty in the way of the publication—the failure of my sight, which totally prevented my conducting the work through the press—by taking upon himself the correction of the proofs: a laborious and irksome task to any one besides the author; and demanding a sacrifice of time that can only be appreciated by those, who, like myself, know the multifarious nature of the engagements by which every hour of his life is so completely absorbed.

Mr. Joseph Jacobs has furnished a carefully compiled list of authors quoted in this work, and of the references made to them, which will be found of use to those who wish to pursue the subject still further.

C. W. KING.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,
August 26, 1887.

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INTRODUCTION.

That nothing upon the subject of Gnosticism should have hitherto been attempted in our language except by Dr. Walsh in his very meagre sketch (long since out of print), seemed to me a sufficient excuse for my undertaking the same task upon a more comprehensive scale, as well as upon different principles. Dr. Walsh's performance, entitled 'An Essay on Coins, Medals, and Gems, as illustrating the progress of Christianity in the Early Ages,' is little more than an abridgment of some popular Church History for the period comprehended within its scope, illustrated from the very scanty store of monuments at his command; whilst his explanations are, like the source supplying them, based upon grounds altogether fallacious, and, even to the beginner, obviously unsatisfactory.

Taking for granted, upon the bare word of their opponents, that the various Teachers of the Gnosis were mere *heretics*, that is, perverters of the regular (!) Christian doctrine which they had at first embraced as a divine revelation, he, like his guides, did not trouble himself any further to investigate the true origin of their systems, but was content with roughly sketching their most prominent features; whilst in explaining their extant productions, he refers all, however diverse in nature, to the same school, and interprets them according to his own preconceived and baseless views of their character.

On such a plan as this, neither the doctrines nor the monuments they have bequeathed to us in such profusion are susceptible of even a plausible explanation, much less of one capable of satisfying an unprejudiced and inquiring mind. The method, therefore, of treating the subject which I have followed in the present work is to begin by reviewing the great religious systems of the East, flourishing at the time of the promulgation

of Christianity in those regions, with the influence of these systems upon the modes of thought and expression of both the missionaries of the new creed and their opponents; and lastly to establish, upon the testimony of the Apostle to the Gentiles himself, the *previous existence* of the germs of Gnosticism in the cities that were the scene of his most important labours.

In my sketch of these older systems I have done little more than condense Matter's admirable introduction to his 'Histoire Critique du Gnosticisme'; but from that point forward have carried on my investigations according to a theory to which that writer once alludes approvingly, although, from some unaccountable reason, he has neglected to follow it out to its legitimate consequences. Restricting himself to describing in his lucid and elegant style the speculations of the several heresiarchs, and seeking no further back than the Zendavesta and Kabbala for the storehouses whence they all must have drawn their first principles, he falls into the grave error of representing their doctrines as *novel*, and the pure *inventions* of the persons that preached them.

That the seeds of the Gnosis were originally of *Indian* growth, carried so far westward by the influence of that *Buddhistic* movement which had previously overspread all the East, from Thibet to Ceylon, was the great truth faintly discerned by Matter, but which became evident to me upon acquiring even a slight acquaintance with the chief doctrines of Indian theosophy. To display this in the most incontrovertible manner, the two systems, each in its highest form of development—that of Valentinus, and that of the Nepalese Buddhists—are described and confronted for the sake of establishing their original identity: and throughout these pages innumerable other points of affinity will be found noticed as they present themselves. Actual *historical proof* of the same fact will also be adduced, establishing the important circumstance (but hitherto entirely unnoticed, or disregarded) that Buddhism had already been planted in the dominions of the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemics at least as early as the times of the generation following the establishment of those dynasties, and was provided for in treaties made between those Grecian princes and the great

Hindoo promoter of the religion. In the history of the Church it is most certain that almost every notion that was subsequently denounced as *heretical* can be traced up to Indian speculative philosophy as its genuine fountain-head: how much that was allowed to pass current for *orthodox* had really flowed from the same source, it is neither expedient nor decorous now to inquire.

In order to obtain a clear view of the principal forms of Gnosticism, as well as to escape relying upon second-hand information (in this case more than elsewhere untrustworthy), I commenced the collecting materials for the present work by carefully perusing the vast 'Panarion' of Epiphanius—a laborious undertaking, but well repaid by the vivid picture he presents of the inner state of society under the Lower Empire, and of the war even at that late period so fiercely waged between Reason and Faith. The 'Panarion' is a connected history of the Gnosis in all its developments during the first three centuries—the author quoting Irenæus for the earlier ages; for the later his account is of the highest value, having been derived from personal experience, Epiphanius having in his youth belonged to the Marcosian sect. After his days nothing new sprung up in the field of Religious philosophy, before so diversified with the vigorous and more curious flowers (or weeds) of the Gnosis; the civil now combining with the ecclesiastical power to cut down and root out all such daring and irregular growths of the human mind.

Since the first publication of this treatise I have become acquainted with and minutely studied two authorities of the greatest importance for the true understanding of Gnosticism—the one for its philosophy; the other for its tangible remains. 'The Refutation of all Heresies,' of Hippolytus, written two centuries before the 'Panarion,' gives a view of the chief schools of the Gnosis, drawn up with the utmost intelligence united with the most charming candour; qualities sadly to seek in the other ecclesiastical historians. The 'Pistis-Sophia,' the only Gnostic Gospel preserved, throws a light upon the terminology and machinery of the religion that, before its discovery and publication was perfectly unattainable. Both

these treatises are of recent discovery, and consequently their assistance was lost to the previous historians of Gnosticism. I have therefore availed myself largely of these invaluable resources, which will be found doing good service in almost every section of the present work.

After considering the class of speculations that owed their birth to India, next in importance for her contributions to the *opinions*, still more to the *monuments* before us, comes Egypt with her primeval creed, although exhibited in its Romanized and latest phase; and whose productions are too often confounded with the true offspring of the Gnosis. These remains are here discriminated; their distinctive characters are pointed out; and they are arranged under several heads, according as their object was religious or medicinal. In the consideration of these remains, Bellermann's classification has been chiefly followed; according to which the truly Gnostic are regarded as those only that exhibit the figure of the Pantheus, *Abraxas*, the actual invention of Basilides, and which gives its name to the class. The second, *Abraxoids*, includes the types borrowed from different religions by the other Gnostic teachers. The third, *Abraxaster*, consists of such as in their nature are purely astrological, and intended for talismans; deriving their virtues from the stars. In the first of these classes much space has been devoted to the ingenious creation of the Alexandrine philosopher, the pantheistic image of the supreme Abraxas; whose title has hitherto been improperly applied to monuments some of which are anterior in date to his embodiment in a visible form; whilst others spring from nations entirely unconnected with his worship. Of this *eidolon* of the *personage* thereby typified, of the meaning of his *name* and titles, much information has been collected, and presented here in a connected form for the benefit of those interested in learning what can on safe grounds be established in elucidation of these abtruse questions.

Mithraicism, under whose kindly and congenial shelter so much of Occidental Christianity grew up unmolested, is reviewed in its due order, and the causes explained of an alliance at first sight so inexplicable. With this subject are connected the singular resemblance between the ceremonial of the two, and the transfer

of so much that was Mithraic into the practice of the orthodox; and many curious memorials will be found described bearing witness to the reality of this adaptation.

After the Mithraic, the religion of *Serapis* comes to be considered; a worship which, besides being the last of the Heathen forms to fall before the power of Christianity, had previously contributed, as largely as the Mithraic, to the constitution of the later Gnosticism. It is in truth a great mistake, the confining the name of "Gnostic" (as is commonly done) to the sectaries who, boasting of their "superior lights," declared that they were the only real Christians (as did the Ophites), and that too in virtue of a creed professedly of their own devising. Such Gnostics indeed were Christians by their own showing, and regarded all who differed from them as *heretics:* but at the same time they based their arguments upon the tenets of Pagan religions; very far from regarding the latter as the empty fabrications of demons, which was the persuasion of the orthodox. But although they accepted these ancient Ethnic legends, it was only because through the help of their "knowledge" they were enabled to discern the truth enveloped within these seemingly profane traditions. But the followers of Mithras and of Serapis had in reality, and long before them, a Gnosis of their own, communicated in their *Mysteries* to the initiated few; and they opposed to the predictions of orthodox and Gnostic alike claims and pretensions lofty as their own. The Emperor Hadrian, a most diligent inquirer into things above man's nature, got himself initiated into one mystery after another; nevertheless we shall find him writing from Alexandria that the worship of Christ and of Serapis was in that city one and the same, and moreover the sole religion of that immense population. Consequently, those initiated into the true secrets of the old religion must have recognised the fact that their deity, whether the Sun or the Soul of the Universe, was nothing but a *type* of the *One*, the Saviour recently revealed to them: or else it would appear (which tells equally for our argument) that the new converts, in order to escape persecution, enjoyed their own faith under the covert of the national worship, which was susceptible of a spiritual interpretation quite cognate to their own ideas,

and indeed enshrouding the same. As for the worshippers of Mithras, their whole elaborate system of sacraments and degrees of initiation had no other object than the securing of spiritual enlightenment and spiritual blessings. The foundation being the pure teaching of Zoroaster, its holders were prepared gladly to accept any higher revelation, and to discover that the greater mystery had been foreshadowed in the types and ceremonies of the former one. In this way a man might continue a Mithraicist and yet accept all the doctrines of Christianity, as the priests of that religion in their last days assured the incredulous Augustine.

After thus pointing out the various elements which the Apostles of the Gnosis worked up so ingeniously into one harmonious whole, incorporating therewith so much of the Christian scheme as fitted to the rest, we come prepared to the examination of the *Symbols* and *Terminology* by which these ideas were communicated to the members of the sect who had attained to the *Arcanum;* the composite *images* or *sigils* "having a voice for the intelligent, which the vulgar crowd heareth not."

Astrology justly claims for her own a large share of the relics popularly called *Gnostic;* for Gnosticism, from the beginning, had linked its own speculations to those of the Magians' national science, and borrowed as a vehicle for its own peculiar ideas the machinery of the latter—its Astral Genii, Decani, and Myriageneses. And this truth was seen by the earliest writers upon Gnosticism, for Hippolytus proves conclusively, at much length, that the system of the Peratae (a branch of the Ophites) was nothing more than a barefaced plagiarism from the rules of Astrology. Under this head I have endeavoured to separate the purely Astrological talismans from those to which the *illuminati*, their makers, had given a more spiritual sense. "Astrology, not Christ, is the author of their religion," says Hippolytus of the sects founded by Euphrates and Celbes; and proceeds to give extracts from their writings, held in the highest esteem at the time, which amply bear out his assertion.

Next pour in, a multitudinous swarm, the stones covered over with long strings of bare *inscriptions*, genuine offspring of the Kabbala, that betray the handiwork of the idol-hating Jewish

dreamers of Alexandria—spells even then ascribed to Solomon, and which secured the favour

> "Of those demons that are found
> In fire, air, flood, or under ground;
> Whose power hath a true consent
> With planet or with element."

One object I have kept steadily in view throughout the whole of this investigation—to show how the productions of the different schools are to be distinguished from each other; and to this particular attention has been given in describing the numerous remains proceeding from the several sources just enumerated, that are collected in the accompanying plates, and thus in some degree to remedy the confusion that reigns at present in the whole department. My predecessor, Matter, busied himself only with the doctrines, making use of the monuments merely in illustration of his remarks; but as my own labours are properly designed to be subsidiary to his invaluable treatise, I refer the reader to him for the more complete elucidation of the *philosophy* of Gnosticism, and give my full attention to its *archæological* side, which he has too cursorily glanced at, and for which nothing has been done of any importance since the publications of Chiflet and Montfaucon.

Last to be considered comes the Gnosis in its final and grandest manifestation, the composite religion of *Manes:* with its wonderful revival and diffusion over Mediæval Europe; and its supposed connexion with the downfall of the Templars, of which catastrophe the history and causes are here briefly sketched; although to form a satisfactory judgment on the merits of the case is about the hardest problem history can offer. With their scandal and their fate is coupled the most singular phenomenon of modern times—the preservation by their *professed* descendants, the *Freemasons*, of so much symbolism that appears to be indisputably Gnostic in its origin. For this, however (unfortunately for the lovers of mystery), a very matter of fact but doubtless sufficient cause can be assigned, and by valid arguments established: when the solution of the enigma irresistibly brings to mind Æsop's apologue of the "Fox and the Mask," and his exclamation of disappointment after he had at

last mustered up sufficient courage to examine the interior of the awe-inspiring and venerable head. This section is illustrated by all the information I have been able to glean from different sources upon the curious subject of *Masons' Marks*—which, yet existing and in common use amongst our own craftsmen and equally so amongst the Hindoos in daily religious observance, can be traced back through Gothic retention, and Gnostic usage, through old Greek and Etruscan art, to their ultimate source; and which attest more convincingly than anything else what region gave birth to the theosophy making such liberal use of the same *siglæ* in Roman times. To assist inquirers into this point I have been careful to give references to all the published lists of these Marks that have come to my knowledge; which same rule I have observed as regards other monographs upon the several various questions discussed in the following pages. In this way the shortcomings of myself can be supplied by those desirous of fuller information: for I am well aware that my own best qualification for attempting an arduous investigation like the present, extending over so many and unconnected branches of learning, lies in a larger practical experience of the monuments themselves, tangible and literary, than was possessed by those who have hitherto attempted it. And as it is a most true adage, "Dans le pays des aveugles le borgne est roi," there is some probability of my labours proving both novel and interesting to many, who desire to know something authentic upon the much-talked-of but little understood subject of Gnosticism.

Related to this religion by their nature are *talismans* and *amulets* in general; for Gnostic symbols and Gnostic formulæ gave their virtue to many of the class: being borrowed either directly from the Gnosis, or from the older creeds out of which the latter was constructed. Their employment, and the notions generating them, have been here described; showing the derivation of many of the mediæval examples from the Gnostic class; and by following out the same principle it has been attempted to find a key to their cabalistic legends, which may fit them better than any hitherto offered by their interpreters—*symbols* and *emblems* being with them those conveying the idea of *death*,

which last indeed has of all others furnished the richest store of such imagery; for thereby the human mind endeavoured to familiarise itself with the thought of mortality, and by embellishing the idea tried to reconcile itself to the inevitable. This being a topic of universal interest, to say nothing of its very important relations to Art, my collections connected therewith have been somewhat extensive, and embrace many particulars neglected by Lessing in his curious essay entitled 'Wie die Alten den Tod gebildet.'

With respect to the *illustrations* of this book, many doubtless will be surprised as well as disappointed at finding them derived entirely from monuments of such small apparent importance as *engraved stones;* and, thinking this part incomplete on that account, may accuse the author of negligence in not having had recourse to other evidences of a more public character. But the limitation is in truth the necessary result of the nature of the things discussed in this inquiry. Secret Societies, especially the one whose maxim was (as Clemens records) that truly wise one—

"Learn to know all, but keep thyself unknown;"

erect no *monuments* to attract public attention. They deal but in *symbols*, to be privately circulated amongst their members in *passwords* known only to the *illuminati;* or else they embody their doctrines in mystic drawings, like the Ophite "Diagramma"; or upon papyri long since committed to the flames. The man of taste, but not an antiquary, will certainly exclaim against the rudeness of the drawing in my illustrations; but the truth is that, rude as they look, they in most cases *flatter* their originals, the extreme barbarism of which it was often found impossible to reproduce with any hope of leaving the meaning recognisable. Be it remembered that

"Gratia non habitat, non hoc Cyllenius antro."

Pallas no longer, as in the earlier ages of the art, guided the engraver's hand, but Siva and Bhavani (ill-disguised as Hermes and Isis) suggested the designs; or else he was inspired by the Typhonian monsters which imagined the Genii of Astrology. The religion of *Fear*, under its various manifestations, now

reigned supreme, having banished the beauteous sensuous machinery of the old Greek Nature-worship, into which nothing that was malignant or hideous was ever suffered to intrude. The virtue of the *talisman* lay in the type it carried; and in its own material substance the *manner* of the exhibition of the potent sigil was altogether unregarded. One of the most learned men this University has ever produced once remarked to me that the Gnostic theories reminded him of the visions that float through the brain of a *madman*—not of a *fool.* Circumstances following gave a melancholy *force* to this acute and accurate distinction. Let any imaginative person read my extracts from the "Revelation" of Marcus, with all its crazy ingenuity in deducing the nature of the Deity from the properties of numerals; above all, his exemplification of Infinity by the perpetual multiplication of the letters contained in other letters making up a name—he will speedily find his brain begin to whirl, and be reminded of similar phantoms of numerals recurring in endless series, and the equally endless attempts to sum them up in order to obtain repose, that fill the head when suffering from the first approaches of fever before actual delirium pushes memory from her seat. Or, again, when the febrile disturbance of the brain is yet slighter, one will sometimes awake out of a dream with a fleeting sensation of inexpressible happiness arising from the immediate attainment of Omniscience in virtue of something that has just been revealed to him; but too soon he finds that ineffable *something* has fled for ever, all that is left of it being the faint recollection that it was contained in a *numeral.* And one of the most striking points in the revelation of the 'Seherin von Prevorst,' so religiously recorded by Justinus Kerner (and which proves that *all* the wondrous narrative was not imposture), is her declaration that she could see the entire history of each year as it closed, with every event, however trifling, clear and distinct before her mind, all comprehended within the form of a single *numeral;* and her assertion upon these grounds that at the Judgment-Day the whole past life of every man will thus be pictured in a single moment before his mind's eye.

About half the number of the drawings for these illustra-

tions were done by myself from the most interesting specimens that came under my notice in the course of several years, so that I am able to vouch for their scrupulous fidelity. Afterwards, when the sudden failure of my sight prevented my carrying on the drawings, the kindness of the then owner of most of the originals came to my assistance and furnished the remainder. Most of them in fact were taken from the large and unpublished set contained in the ancient Praun Cabinet (formed three centuries ago), now unfortunately broken up. The Gnostic stones, however—73 in number—have been since that time purchased for the British Museum, where they will be found conveniently arranged for consultation, in the Egyptian Room, which contains the works in terra-cotta. This my collection of drawings was in truth the occasion of the present work; for after making out a detailed description of each specimen, it became easy to put the mass of materials I had collected for their elucidation into a form available for supporting my explanations by showing the grounds on which they were based: and in this way the work has grown up by gradual accretion to its present dimensions. The theme offers so boundless a variety of interesting subjects for research, one suggesting another in endless succession, that it can only be compared to Marcus' own exposition of the infinite composition of the Ineffable Name (quoted above), and would alone supply materials for a whole library of distinct treatises upon its various subdivisions.

In those few instances where the better style of the original deserved reproduction by a more artistic hand, I have had recourse to the services of Mr. R. B. Utting, who has executed the woodcuts with a spirit as well as an accuracy that leave nothing to be desired.

PART I.

GNOSTICISM AND ITS SOURCES.

Τουτοῦ με χάριν πέμψον, Πάτερ,
σφραγῖδας ἔχων καταβήσομαι,
Αἰῶνας ὅλους διοδεύσω,
μυστήρια πάντα διανοίξω,
μορφὰς δὲ θεῶν ἐπιδείξω,
καὶ τὰ κεκρυμμένα τῆς ἁγίας ὁδοῦ,
ΓΝΩΣΙΝ καλέσας, παραδώσω.

Ophite Hymn, (Hippolytus, v. 10.)

"Non è puleggio da piccola barca
Quel che fendendo va l'ardita prora,
Nè da nocchier ch'a sè medesmo parca."

(Dante, *Parad.* xxiii. 68.)

THE GNOSTICS AND THEIR REMAINS.

GNOSTICISM AND ITS ORIGIN.

The general name "Gnostics" is used to designate several widely differing sects, which sprang up in the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire almost simultaneously with the first planting of Christianity. That is to say, these sects then for the first time assumed a definite form, and ranged themselves under different teachers, by whose names they became known to the world, although in all probability their main doctrines had made their appearance previously in many of the cities of Asia Minor. There, it is probable, these sectaries first came into definite existence under the title of "Mystae," upon the establishment of a direct intercourse with India and her Buddhist philosophers, under the Seleucidae and the Ptolemies.

The term "Gnosticism" is derived from the Greek, *Gnosis*, knowledge—a word specially employed from the first dawn of religious inquiry to designate the science of things divine. Thus Pythagoras, according to Diogenes Laertius, called the transcendental portion of his philosophy, Γνῶσις τῶν ὄντων, "the knowledge of things that *are*." And in later times *Gnosis* was the name given to what Porphyry calls the *Antique* or *Oriental* philosophy, to distinguish it from the Grecian systems. But the term was first used (as Matter on good grounds conjectures) in its ultimate sense of *supernal* and *celestial* knowledge, by the Jewish philosophers belonging to the celebrated school of that nation, flourishing at Alexandria. These teachers, following the example of a noted Rabbi, Aristobulus, surnamed the *Peripatician*, endeavoured to make out that all the wisdom of the Greeks was derived immediately from the Hebrew

Scripture; and by means of their well-known mode of allegorical interpretation, which enabled them to elicit any sense desired out of any given passage of the Old Testament, they sought, and often succeeded, in establishing their theory. In this way they showed that Plato, during his sojourn in Egypt, had been *their own* scholar; and still further to support these pretensions, the indefatigable Aristobulus produced a string of poems in the names of Linus, Orpheus, Homer, and Hesiod—all strongly impregnated with the spirit of Judaism. But *his* Judaism was a very different thing from the simplicity of the Pentateuch. A single, but very characteristic, production, of this *Jewish* Gnosis has come down to our times. This is the "Book of Enoch" (v. p. 18), of which the main object is to *make known* the description of the heavenly bodies and the *true names* of the same, as revealed to the Patriarch by the angel Uriel. This profession betrays, of itself, the Magian source whence its inspiration was derived. Many Jews, nevertheless, accepted it as a divine revelation; even the Apostle Jude scruples not to quote it as of genuine Scriptural authority. The "Pistis-Sophia," attributed to the Alexandrian heresiarch Valentinus (so important a guide in the following inquiry), perpetually refers to it as: The highest source of knowledge, as being dictated by Christ Himself, "speaking out of the Tree of Life unto IEOT, the Primal Man." Another Jewish-Gnostic Scripture of even greater interest, (inasmuch as it is the "Bible" of the only professed Gnostic sect that has maintained its existence to the present day, the Mandaites of Bassora,) is their text-book, the "Book of Adam." Its doctrines and singular application of Zoroastrism to Jewish tenets, present frequent analogies to those of the Pistis-Sophia, in its continual reference to the ideas of the "Religion of Light," of which full particulars will be given when the latter remarkable work comes to be considered (see p. 14). "Gnosticism," therefore, cannot receive a better definition than in that dictum of the sect first and specially calling itself "Gnostics," the *Naaseni* (translated by the Greeks into "Ophites"), viz., "the beginning of perfection is the knowledge of man, but absolute perfection is the knowledge of God." And to give a general view of the nature of

the entire system, nothing that I can do will serve so well as to transcribe the exact words of a learned and very acute writer upon the subject of Gnosticism ("Christian Remembrancer," for 1866).

"Starting, then, from this point we ask what Gnosticism is, and what it professes to teach. What is the peculiar *Gnosis* that it claims to itself? The answer is, the knowledge of God and of Man, of the Being and Providence of the former, and of the creation and destiny of the latter. While the ignorant and superstitious were degrading the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made with hands, and were changing 'the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator,' the ancient Gnostics held purer and truer ideas. And when these corrupted and idolatrous forms of religion and worship became established, and were popularly regarded as true and real in themselves, the "Gnostics" held and secretly taught an *esoteric* theology of which the popular creed of multitudes of deities, with its whole ritual of sacrifice and worship, was but the exoteric from. Hence all the mysteries which, almost if not all, the heathen religions possessed. Those initiated into these mysteries, whilst they carefully maintained and encouraged the gorgeous worship, sacrifices and processions of the national religion, and even openly taught polytheism, and the efficacy of the public rites, yet secretly held something very different—at the first, probably, a purer creed, but in course of time, like the exoteric form, degenerating. The progress of declination differed according to race or habit of thought: in the East it tended to superstition, in the West (as we learn from the writings of Cicero) to pure atheism, a denial of Providence. This system was adopted likewise by the Jews, but with this great difference, that it was superinduced upon and applied to a pre-existent religion; whereas in the other Oriental religions, the external was added to the esoteric, and developed out of it. In the Oriental systems the external was the sensuous expression of a hidden meaning; in the Jewish, the hidden meaning was drawn out of pre-existing external laws and ritual; in the former the esoteric alone was claimed as divine, in the latter it was the exoteric which was a matter

of revelation. To repair this seeming defect, the Kabbalists, or teachers of the 'Hidden Doctrine,' invented the existence of a secret tradition, orally handed down from the time of Moses. We may, of course, reject this assertion, and affirm that the Jews learnt the idea of a Hidden Wisdom, underlying the Mosaic Law, from their intercourse with the Eastern nations during the Babylonian captivity; and we may further be assured that the origin of this Secret Wisdom is Indian. Perhaps we shall be more exact if we say that the Jews learnt from their intercourse with Eastern nations to investigate the external Divine Law, for the purpose of discovering its hidden meaning. The heathen Gnostics, in fact, collected a Gnosis from every quarter, accepted all religious systems as partly true, and extracted from each what harmonized with their ideas. The Gospel, widely preached, accompanied by miracles, having new doctrines and enunciating new truths, very naturally attracted their attention. The Kabbalists, or Jewish Gnostics, like Simon Magus, found a large portion of apostolic teaching in accordance with their own, and easily grafted upon it so much as they liked. Again the Divine power of working miracles possessed by the Apostles and their successors naturally attracted the interest of those whose chief mystery was the practice of magic. Simon the Magician was considered by the Samaritans to be 'the great Power of God;' he was attracted by the miracles wrought by the Apostles; and no doubt he sincerely 'believed,' that is, after his own fashion. His notion of Holy Baptism was probably an initiation into a new mystery with a higher Gnosis than he possessed before, and by which he hoped to be endued with higher powers; and so likewise many of those who were called Gnostic Heretics by the Christian Fathers, were not Christians at all, only they adopted so much of the Christian doctrine as accorded with their system."

The consideration of the local and political circumstances of the grand foci of Gnosticism will serve to explain much that is puzzling in the origin and nature of the system itself. *Ephesus* was, after Alexandria, the most important meeting-point of Grecian culture and Oriental speculation. In regard to

commerce and riches, although she yielded to the Egyptian capital, yet she rivalled Corinth in both, which city in truth she far surpassed in her treasures of religion and science. Her richness in theosophic ideas and rites had from time immemorial been manifested in her possession of Diana, "whom all Asia and the world," worshipped—that pantheistic figure so conformable to the genius of the furthest East; her College of "Essenes" dedicated to the service of that goddess; and her "Megabyzae," whose name sufficiently declares their Magian institution. Hence, also, was supplied the talisman of highest repute in the antique world, the far-famed "Ephesian spell," those mystic words graven upon the zone and feet of the "image that fell down from Jupiter;" and how zealously magic was cultivated by her citizens is apparent from St. Luke's incidental notice of the cost of the books belonging to those that used "curious arts" (τὰ περίεργα, the regular names for sorcery and divination) destroyed by their owners in the first transports of conversion to a new faith. Such converts, indeed, after their early zeal had cooled down, were not likely to resist the allurements of the endeavour to reconcile their ancient, far-famed wisdom, with the new revélation; in short, to follow the plan invented not long before by the Alexandrian Jew, in his reconciliation of Plato with Moses and the Prophets. "In Ephesus," says Matter, "the speculations of the Jewish-Egyptian school, and the Semi-Persian speculations of the Kabbala, had then recently come to swell the vast conflux of Grecian and Asiatic doctrines; so there is no wonder that teachers should have sprung up there, who strove to combine the religion newly preached by the Apostle with the ideas so long established in the place. As early as the year A.D. 58, St. Paul, in his First Epistle to Timothy, enjoins him to warn certain persons to abstain from teaching 'strange doctrines,' those myths and interminable genealogies that only breed division. These same 'myths and genealogies' apply, without any doubt, to the theory of the Emanation of the Æons-Sephiroth, and to all the relations between the Good and Bad Angels that the Kabbalists had borrowed from the religion of Zoroaster."

Again, after condemning certain doctrines concerning the

obligation to complete asceticism, adopted literally from the Essenes, the Apostle adds, "keep safe the precious charge entrusted to thee, avoiding profane novelties and the *antitheses* of the *knowledge*, falsely so-called, of which some making profession have gone astray from the faith of Christ." It was assuredly *not* the mere fables by which the new converts sought to enrich and complete the Christian doctrine (such as we still have samples of in the childish, though pious fictions of the Apocryphal Gospels), such things as these were certainly not the "false knowledge," which set itself up against the "true knowledge," that is, Revelation itself, as something superior to that Revelation. It must, on the contrary, have been a doctrine professing to make a *science* out of the Christian faith, and that, too, a *science* founding its principles upon *antitheses*. Now what are these "antitheses" (or, oppositions) but the teaching of the Zendavesta, concerning the two Empires of Light and Darkness; the two grand classes of Intelligences, the good and the evil spirits; and the perpetual combat going on between them? Now these antitheses, or the principle of Dualism, is that which forms the most conspicuous feature of the Gnostic scheme; and in the Apostle's words we trace one of the most obvious ways in which such doctrines were communicated, and how they insinuated themselves into the infant Church.

In fact the ancient commentators, Theodoret and Chrysostom, who were thoroughly conversant with the Gnosticism of their own day, apply this passage of St. Paul to that actual precursor of Gnosticism, his indefatigable rival Simon Magus himself, whose curious tenets had by that time been widely diffused throughout Asia Minor.

So deeply rooted were such speculations in the minds of many of the Ephesians, that the Apostle, in his second Epistle to Timothy, written six years later, returns perpetually to the subject, whilst in his Epistle to the Church at Ephesus, he entreats his flock not to be seduced by "vain discourses," or "new-coined appellations," (as one reading has it, and which applies forcibly to the Gnostic nomenclature), nor by human doctrines that have no more solidity in themselves than the

wind, whereof no one knows whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. Nay more, he even employs the very terminology of Gnosticism, as when he says, "Ye were dead in error and in sins: ye walked according to the *Æon* of this world, according to the *Archon* who has the dominion of the air," that is, the Demiurgus Ildabaoth. Here we have the Devs of Zoroaster, whose hosts fill the air, deceive mankind, blind their understandings, and lead them into temptation. Again when he adds, "We war not against flesh and blood, but against the *Dominions*, the *Powers*, the *Lords* of the *Darkness*, the malevolence of the *Spirits* in the upper regions"—all these are regular Gnostic epithets, having also their place in the Kabbalistic theology. The later Gnosticism is, in fact, as Chiflet has well expressed it, "the spirit of Asiatic antiquity seeking to assert its empire over the soul of Man by insinuating itself into the Christian Church." The Ophites, even in the early times of Hippolytus, boasted that they of all men were the only real Christians, because they alone *comprehended* the *real* nature of the Saviour. At the same time, they diligently attended the celebration of all the ancient Mysteries, notably the Eleusinian and the Phrygian, declaring that through their *knowledge* they had gotten the key to the hidden meaning of the whole ceremonial, which by types and figures foreshadowed the coming of the Christ. But indeed, Gnosticism, in its primitive form, had almost supplanted, by spiritualizing it, the beautiful materialism of the early Greek and Latin mythologies. Catholicism, through its unity and greater simplicity, in the end triumphed over the conflicting Gnostic philosophies, which became extinct as a *professed* religion in the sixth century, so far as Europe was concerned, and whose relics in Asia were at the same moment covered over with impenetrable obscurity by the sudden deluge of the Mahommedan conquest. Nevertheless, even in the first-named scene of its domination, it was not to be eradicated without leaving behind it deep traces in the writings and symbolisms of the magicians, astrologers, and seekers after the *grand arcanum* throughout the whole course of the Middle Ages. Thus there is a passage in Dante (Paradiso, xviii.) replete with the profoundest symbolism, and which, of course, our Freemasons claim for their

own, and *that* with all possible security, because the very nature of the assumption exempts them from being called upon to publish the interpretation of the mystery. The poet here tells how the *five* times *seven* letters making up the *five* words "Diligite justitiam qui judicatis terram" came forth in the star Jupiter, when the beatified spirits of just princes hovered over the final M, forming their hosts into the figure of an eagle. Certainly the importance given to the numerals *five* and *seven* in this revelation savours much of Gnostic phraseology, and reminds one of the thirty letters which make up the quadrisyllabic Name of God, as made known by Truth unto the heresiarch Marcus, the history of which shall be given in the fitting place. Dante had before (Canto vi.) spoken of the "awe that overcomes him before the B and I C E," evidently the initials of some mighty password, although his commentators most prosaically interpret them as the mere diminutive of the name of his lost love, Beatrice. It was to its connection with Gnosticism that primitive Christianity owed the accusation of being a *Magical* system—a superstition not only *nova* but *malefica.* There is a curious passage in Dio Cassius, where, mentioning how the Christian Legion in M. Aurelius' Quadian War obtained rain from Heaven through their prayers, he remarks, "the Christians can bring about anything they desire through prayer." In later times the various factions within the Church were fond of retorting upon each other this ancient aspersion of the pagans: it was on the charge of magical practices, says Ammianus, that the Arians managed to depose and exile the great Athanasius himself.

The history of Gnosticism, written by its contemporaries, still forms a copious library, despite the losses and damages it has sustained through the injuries of time. In the carrying out of the chief object of the present work—the elucidation of the *tangible* remains of the Gnosis—no historical record has yielded me by any means so much service as "The Refutation of all Heresies," composed by *Hippolytus*, bishop of Ostia (Portus), early in the third century. Many points, hitherto seeming hopelessly enveloped in darkness, have been made clear by the careful perusal of his judicious summaries of the systems

of the different gnostic apostles. His views of their doctrines are evidently drawn up with equal candour and intelligence, and fully bear out his declaration, "that his design was not to vilify the holders of such doctrines, but merely to make known the sources whence they had really derived their pretended revelation." And he keeps his word throughout, never once indulging, like the later controversialists, in invectives against asserted *practices*, but exhibiting the tenets only of his opponents, and, with much ingenuity, showing up their gross plagiarism from Pagan philosophy. His eagerness for discovering the latter source in the fount of every gnostic stream, sometimes leads him to detect relationship that does not actually exist, and still oftener to pronounce a recent *copy* of the other what was in reality drawn directly from the same Oriental prototype—true origin of the old Greek idea with which he identifies it. But this invaluable, as well as most interesting, treatise breathes all through that spirit of charity and forbearance that made a writer belonging to a still persecuted religion, happy to be allowed to subsist through the tolerance of its neighbours. The abuse and scurrilous tales in which the later Epiphanius revels sufficiently indicate the writer belonging to an established Church, able at length to call in the secular power to assist in convincing all adversaries of their errors by the unanswerable arguments of rack, rope and faggot.

Irenaeus, a Gaul by birth, and disciple of Polycarp, himself a disciple of St. John, was elected Bishop of Lyon in the year 174. In that city he composed his great treatise generally styled "Five Books against Heresies," written in an easy, and indeed elegant style, although in one place he excuses its rudeness by the fact of his having been forced during so many years to converse "in a barbarous language"—a remark of interest as showing that *Celtic* still remained the vulgar tongue in his diocese. He is supposed to have died soon after the year A.D. 200; and therefore is somewhat earlier than Hippolytus, who was put to death in A.D. 222, and whose "Refutation" was clearly written after the death of Irenæus, for he quotes him occasionally by the title ὁ μακάριος, "the deceased"; and has incorporated some entire chapters respecting Marcus in his own work.

The great *Origen*, another contemporary, has given some important details concerning the religious systems of the Ophites in his celebrated "Reply to Celsus." Two centuries after him comes *Theodoret*, Bishop of Cyrrhus, in Syria, during the second quarter of the fifth century, who has left very full particulars respecting the great Gnostic school flourishing in that region. The other Christian writers who have treated upon the origin and nature of the same doctrines were nothing more than ignorant churchmen, able to discern nothing in any religion beyond its external forms, and which they construed in the darkest possible sense, ever seeking for the worst interpretation of which these external appearances were susceptible. At the head of this latter class stands *Epiphanius*, author of the most detailed, and, from its furious partisanship, amusing account of the Gnostic sects that is extant—his vast *Panarion*, "Bread-basket," or rather, "Scrap-basket," a whimsical title intended to express the motly nature of its contents, picked up from all quarters. This immense folio (admirably translated into elegant Latin by the learned Petavius) is of the highest interest, full of pictures of the struggles of the human mind to devise for itself a *revelation* that shall plausibly solve all the problems of Man's other nature. Its compiler lived as Bishop of Salamis in Cyprus A.D. 367–403, and displays great zeal in raking up all manner of scandalous stories against the enemies of his adoptive Church. But there is one thing that gives immense value to his labours, the minute account given of Manichæism—that latest and grandest development of the gnosis, which had come into existence in the interval between Epiphanius and Hippolytus.

The rule observed by all *these later* historians of Gnosticism is to represent it as a mere spurious offshoot and corruption of Christianity; invented, usually out of disappointed ambition, by apostates from the true faith established by the several apostles in the Eastern provinces of the Empire—a mode of representing the system than which nothing can be more unfounded. For in its earliest shape, such as it shows itself in the doctrine of Simon Magus, or of Basilides, the heaven-sent *knowledge* merely added upon the old foundations such articles and terms of the Christian faith as seemed capable of being

assimilated to and combined therewith, whilst on the other hand she availed herself of the machinery of the older paganism, to elucidate and prove the mysteries of the new theosophy; and this was conspicuously the character of the systems of Justinus, and of the Peratae; as the very curious extracts given by Hippolytus from their text-books exhibit to the astonishment of the modern reader. That sagacious controversialist was right in calling all these heresies nothing better than the old philosophies disguised under new names; his only error lay in not going back far enough to find their ultimate source. Basilides, for example, never professed Christianity (in fact, Tertullian calls him a Platonist), but he superadded upon the esoteric doctrines of the Egyptian priesthood the newly-imported notions of Buddhism—that probable source of so much that is strange in the Gnosis. The introduction of the religion of Buddha into Egypt and Palestine, a fact only recently discovered, yet substantiated by strong monumental testimony, affords the best solution for innumerable difficulties in the history of religion; but the circumstances relating to this very important question must be reserved for a separate chapter.

As for the actual TEXT-BOOKS of the Gnostics, which in their day formed so immense a library (every founder of a sect being, as if by obligation, a most prolific writer, as Hippolytus shows by the number of works he quotes), hunted up aud carefully destroyed by the victorious orthodox, never perpetuated by transcripts after the sectaries became extinct, all have perished, leaving one sole specimen to attest their nature. But this survivor is of a character so wild and wondrous, that had fortune left it to our choice we could not have preserved a more characteristic representative of its class. This is the *Pistis-Sophia*, "Faith-Wisdom," a work to be perpetually quoted in the following pages, as it throws more light upon the actual monuments of Gnosticism than could hitherto be collected from all the other writers ou the subject put together. On this account a brief summary of its contents will be the best introduction to our inquiry into the nature of the system.

PISTIS-SOPHIA.

This treatise, ascribed to Valentinus (I know not on what authority) was discovered by Schwartze in a Coptic MS. preserved in the British Museum. He transcribed the Coptic text and translated it into Latin; both texts and version were published by Petermann in the year 1853. The original is copiously interspersed with Greek words and phrases; in fact, the Coptic was evidently so poor a language as to have no terms of its own to express any but the most materialistic ideas. The matter of its professed revelation is set forth also with endless repetitions, bespeaking a language destitute of relative pronouns, of conjunctions, and of all the other grammatical refinements necessary for the clear and concise expression of thought.*

The authorship of this record is assigned by itself in several places to Philip the Apostle, whom the Saviour bids to sit down and write these things! This circumstance made me at first conclude it to be the lost Gospel of Philip quoted by Epiphanius, but the particular anecdote adduced by him from that gospel is not to be discovered anywhere in this. But as the original is full of wide lacunae, which often fall in very interesting places, as if purposely defaced to escape the eyes of the profane, such an omission is not altogether conclusive against the identity of the two.

The nature of the book may be briefly sketched as follows. It professes to be a record of the higher teaching of the Saviour communicated to his disciples during the *eleven* years he passed with them on earth after his crucifixion, and when he had returned from his ascension into Heaven. This ascension had been made from the Mount of Olives, where he received from on high two shining vestures inscribed with five mystic words (§ 16), and the names of all the powers whose domains he had to traverse. He thus (as he relates to the disciples) passes through the gate of the Firmament, the Sphere of Fate, and the regions

* It is intended to issue an English translation as a supplement to the present work.

of the Twelve Great Æons, all of whom in succession are terror-smitten, and fall down before him and sing hymns of praise. On arriving at the thirteenth æon, he finds seated below and weeping the excluded Power Pistis-Sophia,* who gives her name to the revelation. She, having once caught a glimpse of the Supreme Light, was seized with a desire to fly upwards into it: but Adamas, the ruler of her proper place, being enraged at this act of rebellion against himself, caused a false light, a veritable *ignis fatuus*, to shine upon the waters of the subjacent chaos which lured down the hapless aspirant, and she was inextricably immersed in the abyss, and beset by the spirits thereof, all eager to deprive her of her native light. This doctrine of the admixture of light, derived from the Treasure of Light, with *matter*, its imprisonment therein, and its extraction and recovery by the appointed "Receivers of the Light" is the pervading idea of this revelation, to a greater extent even than in the Ophite scheme. As part of the same notion comes the frequent allusion to the κέρασμος or chaotic commixture of Light and Matter, to reorganise which is the special object of the Saviour's descent from above.

At least one half of the book is taken up with the account of the successive steps by which she ascends through all the Twelve Æons by the Saviour's aid, and the *confession* she sings at each stage of her deliverance out of chaos. Each confession is proposed by Jesus to a disciple for explanation, and is referred to some psalm or other prophecy containing parallel sentiments; this concordance being occasionally made out with considerable ingenuity. A remarkable peculiarity is that all throughout Mary Magdalene is the chief speaker, and the most highly commended for her spiritual knowledge, though once she is sharply rebuked by Peter for her presumption in thus perpetually putting herself forward unbidden—and not giving the *men* a chance to speak. After Pistis-Sophia has thus regained her lost position, the most valuable portion of the

* This banishment of Sophia from the society of the other Æons is the grand turning-point of the principal Gnostic schemes, although each assigns a different reason for her degradation, as in the system of Valentinus, and also that of the later Ophites.

exposition of doctrines commences. The Magdalene asks the great question as to the final cause of Sin (§ 281), to which Jesus returns a long and minute description of the composition of the soul of man, which is fourfold, the divine spark therein (a particle of the Light yet entangled in the κέρασμος) being encased in a three-fold envelope formed out of the *effluvia* of the rebellious Æons, the tendency of which is to keep it in subjection to the passions, and to themselves, so that when separated from the body it may not be able to escape out of their domains, "the regions of mid-space" here represented as places of pain. These Æons are elsewhere identified with the signs of the Zodiac. Next comes a detailed account of the Rulers of the regions of torment (§ 320), of their *authentic* forms, a crocodile, a bear, a cat, a dog, a serpent, a black bull, &c., and of their *authentic* names; these last are not Semitic, but either Coptic or belong, judging from their terminations, to the mystic language generally used upon the Gnostic stones. After this we have the several punishments appointed for the various sins of mankind, and the exact number of years and even of days required for the expiation of each in its proper dungeon (ταμεῖον). These places of torment are all enclosed within the Dragon of Outward Darkness. It is worthy of remark that the serpent, whenever introduced, is a thing of evil—a sure indication that the book is under the influence of the Kabbala. The same conclusion is deducible from the malignity pervading the entire dispensation which it pictures; and the evident delight it takes in creating and parcelling out the various punishments, of which heretics naturally get the largest share. The philosophic Gnostic schemes have no severer penalty for those who do not listen to them than the want of *Knowledge*, and the subjection to *Matter*. After purgation in these prisons the souls are put into new bodies, and begin a new probation upon earth.

The judge of souls is the Virgin of Light, attended by her seven hand-maids. Certain sins, but few in number, are punished by annihilation, and admit of neither expiation nor atonement. But for all the rest instant remission is procurable, if the friends of the deceased celebrate on his behalf the "Mystery (or, Sacrament) of the Ineffable One." This must be

the very earliest notice extant of the belief in the efficacy of the offering up of a *sacrament* for the redemption of souls, There is a singular provision made for the salvation of a perfectly righteous man, but who in his life-time has not enjoyed the opportunity of being converted. The angels take his departed soul, and carry it through all the realms of punishment with the utmost rapidity, and then conduct him before the Virgin of Light, who clothes it in a new body to recommence its earthly career, to obtain there the advantage of the mysteries and so become an heir of Light. The nature of the particular Mystery, so perpetually alluded to in this work, is in no place explained; it is, however, the highest of the Four and Twenty: for such is the number of the Mysteries here mentioned, one for each of the grades in its celestial hierarchy, for the *Five Marks*, for the *Seven Vowels*, for the *Five Trees* and for the *Seven Amens*. Throughout are interspersed frequent allusions to the seals, and the *numbers* of the Mysteries, courses, and divine personages, borrowed partly from the usages of the Temple, partly from those of the old Egyptian worship. They are repeated and involved in a multitudinous, inextricable sequence, that to one not having the key thereto belonging, strongly calls to mind the numerical vagaries that flit before the mind when slightly delirious: and which even the plodding German editor confesses, in his preface, often made his brain whirl as he attempted to transcribe them.

Lastly comes a long fragment (§ 358), headed "a Portion of the Prayers of Jesus," which tells more directly upon the subject of these researches than anything that has fallen in my way. The Saviour, attended by his disciples, standing sometimes on a mountain, sometimes by the sea, and sometimes in mid-air, addresses prayers to the Father, prefaced with long formulae of the same character, and often in the same words, as those covering the more important Gnostic monuments. Some of these opening invocations are expounded, and seemingly paraphrased, in the prayers following them, though not in a very satisfactory manner. Also Jesus celebrates, with many singular formalities, a sacrifice of wine and water, which, there is reason to believe, is the grand Mystery or Sacrament so often lauded in the foregoing chapters. The whole closes with a

long exposition by him of the influence of the Æons of the Zodiac upon the soul of the infant born under each, and of the fortunate or malign intervention of the planets in such cases. Of the latter the *sacred* names are communicated apparently as used by the Magi. A few Egyptian deities, *e.g.* Bubastes and Typhon, are named here, and the Syrian Barbelo is frequently introduced, as a personage of the very highest importance, being no less than the *heavenly* mother of the Saviour himself. His earthly Mother is indeed represented as attending at these revelations, but she plays a very secondary part therein to the Magdalene and even to Salome. The last thing to be noticed in this most remarkable fruit of a crazy, mystic imagination—it is hard to say whether more Kabbalist, or Magian, or Christian—is the opposed dualism of many of the Powers introduced as agents in the economy of the universe: for example, there is an obedient and a rebellious Adamas (that highest name with the earlier Naaseni), a great and a little Sabaoth, and similar antitheses to be met with also in the later Ophite schemes.

THE BOOK OF ENOCH.

This most ancient (as it professes) of the Hebrew Scriptures being so frequently referred to as the highest authority by the Æon Pistis-Sophia, a brief summary of its doctrine seems to form the necessary complement to the preceding section. The Book of Enoch, though often quoted by the Fathers, had been lost ever since the eighth century (with the exception of a few chapters of a Greek version preserved by Georgius Syncellus), until Bruce brought back three copies of it from Abyssinia. In the canon of that Church it takes its place in the Old Testament immediately before the Book of Job.*

* An English translation was made by Dr. Lawrence, Bishop of Cashel, of which the third edition, with notes, was published in 1837. The best German translation is that of Dillmann, 1857. *Cf.* Schodde *Book of Enoch*, 1882.

This book is divided into ninety chapters, and begins with the preface: "In the Name of God, the merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and of great mercy, and holiness. This Book is the Book of Enoch the prophet. May blessing and help be with him who loves Him, for ever and ever. Amen. Chapter I. This word is the blessing of Enoch with which he blessed the chosen and the righteous that were of old. And Enoch lifted up his voice and spoke, a holy man of God, while his eyes were open, and he saw a holy vision in the heavens, which the angels revealed to him. And I heard from them everything, and I understood what I saw." After this follows the history of the angels, of their having descended from heaven, and produced giants with the daughters of men; of their having instructed them in the arts of war, and peace, and luxury. The names of the leading angels are mentioned, which appear to be of Hebrew origin, but corrupted by Greek pronunciation. The resolution of God to destroy these is then revealed to Enoch. These topics occupy about eighteen chapters. From the eighteenth to the fiftieth chapter Enoch is led by the angels Uriel and Raphael through a series of visions not much connected with the preceding. He saw the Burning Valley of the fallen angels, the Paradise of the saints, the utmost ends of the earth, the treasuries of the thunder and lightning, winds, rain, dew, and the angels who presided over these. He was led into the place of the General Judgment, saw the Ancient of Days on his throne, and all the kings of the earth before him. At the fifty-second chapter, Noah is said to have been alarmed at the enormous wickedness of mankind, and, fearing vengeance, to have implored the advice of his great-grandfather. Enoch told him that a flood of water should destroy the whole race of man, and a flood of fire punish the angels whom the deluge could not affect. In Chapter LIX. the subject of the angels is resumed, Semeiza, Artukaru, Arimeon, Kakabael, Tusael, Ramiel, Damdal, and others to the number of twenty, appear at the head of the fallen spirits, and give fresh instances of their rebellious dispositions. At Chapter LXII. Enoch gives his son Methuselah a long account of the sun, moon, stars, the year, the months, the winds, and the like physical phenomena. This takes up

eight chapters, after which the Patriarch makes a recapitulation of the former pages. The remaining twenty chapters are employed on the history of the Deluge, Noah's preparations for it, and the success which attended them. The destruction of all flesh excepting his family, and the execution of divine vengeance on the angels, conclude the work.

Fig. 1.

GNOSTICISM IN ITS BEGINNING.

To begin with the received account of the RISE AND PROGRESS of the Gnostic *philosophy*, for that is its proper appellation, *heresy* being properly restricted to differences of opinion between members of one regularly established community, we find that as early as the year A.D. 35, the Samaritans were regarding Simon Magus, as "the Great Power of God," and he and his disciple Cerinthus, are represented by the Christian Fathers as the actual founders of Gnosticism, under that accepted name.

Of the former, Hippolytus gives a history which there is no reason for not accepting as correct in the main particulars. He was a native of Gitteh, in the province of Samaria, and commenced his career, and soon acquired great influence amongst his countrymen, by practising magic after the "Thrasymedian method" (*i.e.* jugglery, as previously described by Hippolytus), nay more, by working miracles "through the agency of devils." Having fallen in love with a beautiful courtezan at Tyre, he bought her from her owner, and always carried her about with him, declaring that she was the "Intelligence" (Ἔννοια) that of old was imprisoned in the body of the Grecian Helen, then of the Lost Sheep, but now was restored to him for the salvation of the world. Even *before* the preaching of Christianity he had set up for a teacher of a new religion, plagiarised from Moses and Heraclitus the "Obscure," based upon the axiom that *Fire* was the First Principle of all things, subordinate to which were the "Six Radicals": a curiously compounded mixture of Judaism and Magism, of which Hippolytus gives a full though not very intelligible summary. "This Simon, after he had ransomed Helen, granted salvation unto men by means of his own *knowledge*. For inasmuch as the angels had governed the world ill by reason of their own ambitiousness, he pretended that he was come to set all things right; and having changed his form and made himself like to the Principalities, the Powers, and the

Angels, wherefore it was that he showed himself in the form of man although *not a man* at all, and had suffered the Passion in Judæa, although he had not really suffered it; moreover, that he had manifested himself to the Jews as the Son, in Samaria as the Father, and amongst the Gentiles in other parts as the Holy Ghost; but he submitted to be called by whatsoever name they pleased. The Prophets were inspired by the Angels, creators of the world, when they delivered their prophecies; on which account they that believe in Simon and Helen pay no regard to them (the Prophets) even in our times: and they do whatever they please, pretending that they are redeemed through *his* grace." . . . "Now this same Simon, when he was by his magic arts deceiving many in Samaria, was confuted by the Apostles, and having been cursed by them, he afterwards fell from his reputation and invented these fables. At last, having travelled to Rome, he again ran against the Apostles, and Peter had many encounters with him when he was *seducing multitudes* through his magical practices. Finally, having gone into the land of Persia, he took up his abode under a plane-tree, and there preached his doctrine. But at last, when he was on the point of being convicted for an impostor, in consequence of his making too long a stay in the same place, he gave out that, if he were buried alive, he would rise again on the third day. And in truth, having caused a pit to be dug by his disciples, he commanded himself to be covered over with earth. They therefore did what he commanded them, but he never came back unto this day, inasmuch as he was not a Christ. Now this is the story told concerning Simon, from whom Valentinus borrowed his first ideas, but called them by different names. For 'Mind,' and 'Truth,' and 'the Word,' and 'Life,' and 'the Church,' and 'Man,' the *Æons* of Valentinus, are confessedly the *Six Radicals* of Simon, namely, 'Mind, Intelligence, Voice, Name, Reason, and Thought.'"

But to go on with the series of teachers—this counter-apostolical succession—Simon was followed by Menander, he by Basilides at Alexandria, who, dying about A.D. 138, was replaced by Valentinus, born of Jewish parentage in the same city. This last is styled by Irenæus "Chief of the Gnostics," on account

of the importance and wide diffusion of his doctrines even during his own lifetime. In Syria other sects were being founded contemporaneously with these, taking their names from Marcion and Bardesanes, both of whom tradition represents as Persians by origin, and consequently *Magians* by religious training. The latter is by some called a native of Pontus, a circumstance, however, making no difference as to the source of his opinions, that region being confessedly the seat of Mithraicism, and ruled over by a line claiming descent from the first Darius, or a satrap of his. It is needless to enumerate here the founders of less important sects, until we come to the uprising of Manes, author of the most daring and most permanent theosophy of them all, which fought twice over so long and obstinate a battle with the Catholic faith. This sect, its origin, and tenets, on account of the curiosity of its doctrines, and the immense influence that they exerted over the ancient and mediæval world, will be considered at length in another chapter; as will also the *Ophites* whose name figures so conspicuously in the history of the primitive Church.

What has been mentioned above with respect to the countries producing the founders of all these sects—Egypt, Syria, or Persia—leads us to expect to find one common principle pervading the systems of all, and such is most probably the case. The fundamental doctrine held in common by all the chiefs of the Gnosis was, that the whole creation was not the work of the Supreme Deity, but of the Demiurgus, a simple *Emanation*, and several degrees removed from the highest power. To the latter, indeed, styled by them the "Unknown Father" (or as Simon first designated him "The Boundless Power," and "The Root of all Things"), they attributed the creation of the *intellectual* world—that is, the Intelligences, the Æons, and the Angels—whilst, to the Demiurgus they referred the creation or the *World of Matter*, subject to imperfection from its very nature. But in order clearly to understand the grand principles underlying these doctrines, it is absolutely necessary to possess the main features of the older systems from which these same doctrines were principally borrowed; these systems being that of the Zendavesta, of the Kabbala (which is little more than a

translation of the same), and of the reformed Brahminical religion as taught by the Buddhist missionaries in the dominions of the Syro-Macedonians, or picked up in India by Alexandrian merchants visiting the emporia of Guzerat for the sake of trade.

Although to express their ideas visibly upon their *monuments* (the elucidation of which is the special object of this treatise) the Gnostics largely borrowed the images and symbols of the ancient Egyptian mythology (especially those connected with the Agathodaemon, the Solar god Iao, and the guide of souls, the jackal-headed Anubis), yet these figures were employed in a new sense, unless indeed we suppose (what is probable enough) that their *esoteric* meaning had been from the very beginning similar to that published by the teachers of the new faith. This last explanation was in fact the perpetual boast of Valentinus, and runs through every article of his theosophy as we read it in the interesting summary given by Hippolytus; and again, it must never be forgotten, for it is the key to many of the seeming contradictions in the different systems about to be passed in review, that Greek and Jew carried with them their ancient quarrel into the new field of the Gnosis. The former exalts the Bacchic *Serpent*, whilst he makes *Sabaoth* little better than a demon; the latter continues to abominate the Serpent as the impersonation of Satan, but his Sabaoth is the "Great and Good" (as Pistis-Sophia perpetually entitles him), the defender of the believer's soul against the malignant "Æons of the Sphere," and the influence of Judaism radiating from its second focus, the school of Alexandria, was so much more powerful than ordinary readers of history have ever suspected, that a few remarks upon this very curious subject will form a useful introduction to our consideration of its later philosophy.

INFLUENCE OF JUDAISM ON THE ANCIENT WORLD.

People in these times are still so influenced by the ideas engendered by the fifteen centuries of ecclesiastical *régime*, during which hatred and contempt for the Jewish race formed an

important Christian virtue, that they entirely overlook the influence exercised by Judaism over the minds of the heathen world so long as the Temple stood, and the national worship was celebrated there in all its glory. When the Romans, by their conquest of Syria, and soon after of Egypt, came into direct contact with the Jewish nation, although they disliked them individually, yet they conceived an intense admiration for their ancient, mysterious, and solemn worship. But, in fact, every institution, hallowed by the stamp of antiquity, immediately commanded the respect of the genuine old Roman. The Emperors lost no time in gaining a new patron, of mighty and undefined power, in *Jehovah*, by instituting a daily sacrifice to be ever offered at their own cost on behalf of themselves and empire. The discontinuance of this sacrifice, by the faction of the Zealots which had taken possession of the Temple, is noted by Josephus as the consummating act of the great revolt and attempt to re-establish independence, which brought down final destruction upon Zion. To give a few examples of the hold Judaism had taken upon the imaginations of the highest classes in Rome, whence its vastly magnified power over the minds of the vulgar, may be calculated according to the well-known rule of proportion in such matters. To mark Augustus' freedom from superstition, Suetonius quotes the circumstance of his highly commending the conduct of his grandson Caius, his heir apparent, because—during his visit to Egypt and Palestine—he had forborne to visit Apis in the one and the Temple in the other country. Putting the two religions in this way upon an equality, of itself demonstrates the high place then held by the Jewish in popular estimation; for by that time the Egyptian, as the chapter upon the Serapis-worship will show, had to a great extent superseded the worship of the national deities of Rome. Fuscus Aristius, a friend of Horace's, and therefore to be supposed a person of consequence and of education, makes it his excuse for not attending to a business-matter, that the day happened to be the Sabbath, and that "he was a little superstitious, like many others."

The influence and numbers of the Jews actually residing at Rome under the Republic is strikingly exhibited by some

observations of Cicero in his oration in defence of Flaccus. Flaccus, when commanding in Asia, had prohibited the sending of money to Jerusalem. This money can only mean the tribute paid by each adult Jew to the Temple, of half a shekel, or two drachmæ a head. Flaccus seized the money that had been collected for the purpose in defiance of his edict, amounting at Apamea to nearly one hundred pounds weight of gold, at Laodicea to twenty. The only gold piece of the age being the *stater*, current for twenty-five drachmæ, and of the weight of fifty to the pound, these collections would give us fifty thousand tribute-payers at the former city, and ten thousand at the other. The orator considers this "auri Judaici invidia" so damaging to his cause, that he explains the circumstances in a whisper to the jurymen, in order not to excite the indignation of the Jews amongst his audience. He actually declares that Flaccus's enemies had managed that his cause should be tried in that particular court in order to have the aid of the Jews domiciled in that quarter of Rome, to intimidate the jury, and so gain a verdict against him. "Sequitur auri illa invidia Judaici. Hoc nimirum est illud, quod non longe a gradibus Aureliis hæc causa dicitur. Ob hoc crimen hic locus abs te, Laeli, atque illa turba quæsita est. Scis quanta sit manus, quanta concordia, quantum valeat in concionibus. Submissa voce agam, tantum ut judices audiant. Neque enim desunt qui istos in me atque in optimum quemque incitent, quos ego quo id facilius faciant non adjuvabo." (Chapter XXVIII.) And what is still more surprising this influence continued to work even after the fall of Jerusalem, and the extinction of the people as a nation. Spartianus mentions that Severus in his tour of investigation throughout Asia, when he forbade people to turn Christians, extended the same interdict to the Jewish religion also. Again, to show the natural good-heartedness of Caracalla, he instances his indignation on account of the severe flogging which a boy, his playfellow, had received from his father, with the emperor's approbation, on the score of his Judaising. The circumstances of the friendship point out that the boy thus made a "confessor" must have belonged to one of the best families of Rome. Such a position yet retained by the religion of Abraham is almost inconceivable

at that late period, when it had, besides the vigorous and ever-increasing growth of Christianity, to contend with the varieties of the Gnosis which suited themselves to every taste, and in many instances had sprung immediately out of herself (not out of her hated daughter and rival), and by their union with heathen philosophy, were naturally more attractive to the Gentiles than the original parent. Even at the time when one would have expected the prejudice against anything belonging to that nation to have been the most violent amongst the Romans, we find Vespasian, the actual destroyer of their national existence, erecting a statue in the most honourable of all situations, to an Alexandrian Jew, Tiberius, who had assisted him in his attempt to gain the empire, in some manner not recorded, but possibly in his capacity of the Rothschild of the age by an opportune loan. It is true that Juvenal cannot repress his indignation of all this prostitution to a foreigner of an honour before confined to the most eminent of his countrymen, and hints it to be the duty of every true Roman to express his sense of the injury by committing nuisances under the very nose of the statue.

> "Atque triumphales, inter quos ausus habere
> Nescio quis titulos Ægyptius atque Alabarches,
> Cujus ad effigiem *non tantum* meiere fas est."—I. 130.

In the third century we find the model emperor, Severus Alexander, setting up the image of *Abraham* by the side of Christ and Orpheus, all considered as the divinely-inspired founders of the several schools of mystery (or to go to the probable root of the belief, as so many different *Buddhas*), in the most holy recess of his domestic chapel. A little research amongst the annals of the later emperors would no doubt, furnish many other examples of the hold taken by various particulars of the Jewish creed, in its Babylonian and Alexandrian phases, upon the religious notions of the Romans The fact is easily accounted for, when men's ideas upon the nature of the soul, of God's Government, and of a future state, are entirely vague, as were those of the educated heathen of those times, when (old traditions being discarded as mere unsatisfying poetical fables) they attempted to build up systems

that should explain every difficulty by the help of reason and philosophy alone, although destitute of any solid grounds upon which to lay the first foundation of the fabric. Things being in this state, a religion venerable by its *antiquity* (itself an impenetrable shield against the shafts of infidelity, as even Tacitus concedes: "Hi ritus, quoquo modo inducti, antiquitate defenduntur" *Hist.* v. 5), possessing a complete system that solved every problem by a professedly divine revelation, totally setting itself above reason and human experience, but proclaiming unquestioning credence as the most meritorious of virtues, such a religion could not but gain the victory over its disorderly and discordant competitors, which had nothing but arguments deduced from probabilities and analogies wherewith to oppose it. The same contest we behold passing under our own eyes; Roman Catholicism with its doctrines overthrown, exploded, rejected by reason, learning, and philosophy, for the space of three centuries, is again rapidly bringing back into her fold her lost sheep, which, having wandered through the tempting ways of Protestantism, and of philosophy or infidelity, however people choose to call it, and unable to discover any reason that will bear the test for standing fast at any ultimate point as the absolute truth, at last return weary and disappointed to whence they started, and find it conducive to peace of mind to accept assertion for demonstration, and the age of a tenet as equivalent to its truth.

There is yet another consideration that is of great importance in the present inquiry, which is the close affinity between the Judaism of this period and Magism, the extent of which will be pointed out in the following sections when we come to speak of the Talmud. Remembering how much of the machinery of the one was borrowed from the other, there is little cause for astonishment at discovering that what are generally considered peculiarly Jewish titles of Deity upon relics, may rather be attributed to a Magian source.

The three circumstances thus briefly adduced—namely, the direct influence of the religion of Zion as a "mystery" of the most venerable antiquity, vying with those of Egypt and of Babylon; its subsequent indirect influence through its offshoots

(which left its visible impress upon things tangible); the virtue of its connection with the creed of the Magi, the secret priesthood, or rather, freemasons of the ancient world; these are the things solving the difficulty that must have struck any inquiring mind when beginning to study the so-called Gnostic remains. From the foregoing considerations, at least a plausible reason may be gathered for the fact of the Hebrew names of the Deity, and of his angels, and of the patriarchs, so perpetually being repeated on works presenting the figures of genii and of astral spirits—forms of idol-monsters the most repugnant, one would have thought, to the feelings of the worshippers of those sacred names, profaned by such union; and imagery, from beholding which the true follower of Moses must certainly have recoiled in horror.

THE ZENDAVESTA.

The Zendavesta, literally "text and comment," is the doctrine of Zoroaster (*Zarathrustra*), comprised in eight parts, written at different periods, but of which the earliest have been assigned to the date of B.C. 1200–1000. In its present form it was collected by Ardeshir, the founder of the Sassanian dynasty, from oral tradition, at the time when he re-established the ancient religion of Persia.

In this revelation the Supreme Being is called "Boundless Time" (*Zarvana Akarana*), because to him no beginning can be assigned; he is so surrounded by his own glory, and so far exalted beyond all human comprehension, that he can only be the object of silent veneration. The beginning of creation was made by means of *Emanations*. The first emanation of the Eternal One was Light, whence issued Ormuzd (*Ahuramazda*), the King of Light. Ormuzd is styled the Firstborn of Boundless Time; and the "Ferouer" of him, or Pre-existing Soul (type or idea in Platonic phrase), had existed from all eternity within the primitive Light. By means of his "Word," Ormuzd created the pure world of which he is the preserver and the

judge. Next, he created in his own image the six *Amshaspands*, who stand about his throne, and are his agents with the lower spirits, and with mankind, whose prayers they offer up to him, and to whom they serve for models of perfection. These Amshaspands, of whom Ormuzd is the first, thus making up the mystic number *seven*, are of both sexes, and the Gnostics adopted them, as we shall see further on, into their own systems, with the same distinction of sex. The next series of emanations were the *Izeds*, twenty-eight in number, of whom Mithras is the chief. Like the superior order, they watch over the purity and happiness of the world, of which they are the genii and guardians. The principal names amongst them are Vohu-mano, Mazda, Asha, Vayu (Ventus), Geusurvi (Soul of the Earth), Sraosha (who exactly answers, in point of duties, to the Grecian Hermes and Jewish Gabriel, for he carries the mandates of Ormuzd, and conveys up to him the souls of the righteous).

The third series, the *Ferouers*, are in number infinite. These are the Thoughts or "Ideas" conceived in the mind of Ormuzd before he proceeded to the creation of things. They are the protectors of mankind during this mortal life, and will purify their souls on the Day of the Resurrection.

The creation of these chiefs, with their angelic hosts, had become necessary. Ahriman, the Second-born of the Eternal One—like Ormuzd, an emanation from the Primal Light, and equally pure, but ambitious and full of pride—had become jealous of the Firstborn. On this account the Supreme Being condemned him to inhabit for twelve thousand years the space that is illumined by no ray of light—the black empire of Darkness. This interval will suffice to decide the struggle between Light and Darkness, between Good and Evil. Ahriman, in order to oppose his rival, created in his turn three series of evil spirits, corresponding in number, and antagonistic in office, to each one of the good, and, like them, male and female. The attr[illegible] series is that of the *Arch-Devs*, chained each one to his [illegible] The [illegible] planet, and of whom the chief is Astomogt, "the two-direct influ[illegible]nt of lies." These Devs are the authors of all evil, most venerab[illegible]nd moral, throughout the universe.
Babylon; its su[illegible] a reign of three thousand years, then created

the Animal World in six periods, creating first light—a faint image of the Light celestial—then water, earth, plants, beasts, and lastly, man. Ahriman had concurred in the creation of earth and water, for *Darkness* being already inherent in these two elements, Ormuzd was unable to exclude its nature from them.

Ormuzd had produced by his *Word* a being the type and source of universal life for all creation; this being was called *Life*, or the *Bull* (the same word in Zend stands for both). This creature Ahriman contrived to destroy, but out of its scattered seed Ormuzd, through the agency of the Amshaspand Saphandomad (*Wisdom*), formed the first human pair, Meschia and Meschiane. This couple Ahriman, by a bribe of fruits and milk, succeeded in corrupting, having gained over the female first. Then, to all the good animals made by Ormuzd, he opposed, by his own creation, as many mischievous and venomous ones. The struggle still goes on; the Power of Darkness often is the superior, but the pure souls are assisted and defended by the good genii, and will ultimately triumph. For when things shall seem at their worst, and Evil all-powerful in the creation, three prophets shall appear and restore the lost Light. One of these, Sosioch, shall regenerate the world and restore it to its pristine excellence. Then comes the general Resurrection, when the good shall immediately enter into this happy abode—the regenerated earth, and Ahriman, together with his angels and the wicked, be purified by immersion in a lake of molten metal, so as to render them fitting members of the new kingdom. Thenceforth all will enjoy unchangeable happiness, and, headed by Sosioch, ever sing the praises of the Eternal One.

The religion of Zoroaster was a reformed version of the ancient creed held by the inhabitants of Eritene in Bactria. For it is probable that the first gods of the Aryan race before it split into Indian and Zend, were the powers of Nature, *Indra*, thunder, *Mithra*, sunlight, *Vayu*, wind, *Agni*, fire, *Armaiti*, earth, *Soma*, intoxication. The worship of the last may have been the source of the Dionysia, introduced from India, as the Greeks themselves always asserted. These powers were called *Ahuras* and *Devas* indifferently; but Zoroaster reduced all these

powers to the secondary rank of angels, and used the name *Devas* in a bad sense only. The Zoroastrian was the established religion of the Persians at the time when they conquered Assyria; and to a great extent it superseded the material idolatry of the Babylonians, whose gods Darius and Xerxes melted down without any scruple. But Matter is of opinion that the College of Magi, established long before the Persian conquest of Babylon, accepted the new religion upon the change of masters, retaining nothing of the old besides Astrology and Divination.

It must not be forgotten how large a portion of the Jewish captivity remained permanently in Assyria—only two tribes, Judah and Levi, having been sent back to Jerusalem by Cyrus; and Babylon long continued the seat of a most flourishing Rabbinical school, whilst Judea itself, down to the time of the Macedonian conquest, remained a province of the Persian Empire. How important a part of the Persian population at a much later period were either Jews, or under Jewish influence, appears from the very remarkable assertion of Josephus, "that his nation were encouraged to brave all extremities in their final struggle against the power of Rome by the confident expectation of aid from their brethren beyond the Euphrates." And three centuries later Ammianus notices that Julian's invading army came upon a city entirely inhabited by Jews in the very centre of Persia. After the captivity, the principal literary establishments of the Jews appear to have been seated in central Asia. The schools of Nahardea, of Sora, of Punbiditha, were at least as famous as the schools of Palestine (cf. Jos. Ant. xviii. 12). The latter even appear to have paid a sort of filial deference to these foundations: the Chaldee version of the Pentateuch, made by Onkelos of Babylon, was accepted as the authorised version by all the Jews living in Palestine; and the Rabbi Hillel, coming from that [illegible] capital to Jerusalem, was received by the doctors of the Holy [illegible] as an ornament of the same national school, and this only [illegible] years before the birth of Christ. From all these circum- [illegible] direct influ[illegible]it is easy to perceive how much of the Zoroastrian [illegible] have pervaded the Jewish religion at the time of [illegible] Babylon; its su[illegible]ion of Christianity, when its principal teachers

were the Pharisees or "separatists," if, indeed, their doctors did not actually get their appellation from the word *Pharsi*, "Persian"—an etymology that has something to recommend it. These doctrines, as then taught, are set forth in the *Kabbala*, or "Traditions," so called from *Kabbal*, "to receive" —the main features of which shall be sketched in the following sections.

THE KABBALA AND THE TALMUD.

The origin of the Kabbala is placed by most authors much later than that of Christianity; and, indeed, it is not impossible that its doctrines may have received great developments *after* that epoch;* nevertheless, the elements of them go back to a much more remote antiquity. The Book of Daniel bears the most conspicuous traces of this antiquity, and to the attestation of this record are added other proofs no less convincing. The idea of *Emanation* is, so to speak, the *soul*, the essential element of the Kabbala; it is likewise, as we have already seen, the essential character of Zoroastrism. We may therefore consider that it was through their very intimate connection with Persia that the Jews imbibed that idea.

According to the Kabbala, as according to the Zendavesta, all that exists has emanated from the source of the Infinite Light.

Before all things existed the Primal Being, the "Ancient of Days," the eternal King of Light. This King of Light is the *All*; he is the real cause of all existence; he is the Infinite (*En Soph*); he alone is *He*, there is in him no *Thou*; but he cannot be known, "he is a closed Eye."

The universe is the revelation of the King of Light, and only subsists in Him. His *qualities* are manifested in it, variously modified and in different degrees; it is therefore his "Holy

* The tradition is that it was first committed to writing by Simon Ben Jochai, who, being proscribed by Titus, concealed himself in a cavern for the space of eleven years, the whole of which he devoted to this work, in which he was assisted by the prophet Elias.

Splendour"—the *mantle*, as it were, wherewith he must be clothed in silence. All is an emanation from this Being; the nearer therefore that any approaches to him, the more perfect is it, and the less so does it become as it recedes from him: this idea of *gradation* is eminently Persian. Before the creation of the world, the Primal Light filled all, so that there was no void at all; but when the Supreme Being, residing within this Light, resolved to display and manifest his perfection, he retired within himself, and formed around him a void space. Into this void he let fall his first emanation—a ray of the Light, which is the cause and principle of all existence, uniting in itself the generative and conceptive forces; being both father and mother in the sublimest sense, pervading all, and without which nothing can for an instant subsist.

From this Double Force, designated by the first two letters of the name Jehovah (*Yod*, *He* *), emanated the First-born of God, the *Tikkun*, or "Universal Type" (Platonic *Idea*), and the general container of all beings, united within himself by means of the Primal Ray. He is the creator, preserver, and prime animator of the world. He is the "Light of light," possessing the three primitive forces of the Godhead: the light, the spirit, and the life. Inasmuch as he has *received* what he *gives*, the light and the life, he is considered as equally a generative and conceptive principle as the "Primitive Man," *Adam-Kadmon*; and as man himself is called the "little world," or the microcosm, so this Being, his Type, is properly designated the "great world," or Macrocosm. In this their Adam-Kadmon, the principle of light and life, the Kabbalists have united the attributes of the same principles amongst the Persians.

Adam-Kadmon has manifested himself in ten emanations, which are not indeed actual beings, but sources of life, vessels of the Almighty Power, types of all the creation. Their names are: the Crown, Wisdom, Prudence, Magnificence, Severity, Beauty, Victory, Glory, Foundation, Empire. To Wisdom they gave the title *Jah*; to Prudence *Jehovah*; to Magnificence *El*;

* The I. H. so conspicuously placed on some Gnostic stones probably expresses this name; as being the nearest equivalents the Greek alphabet could furnish for the Hebrew letters.

to Severity *Elohim;* to Victory and Glory *Sabaoth;* to Empire *Adonai.*

These are all attributes of the Supreme, as displayed in his works, through which alone it is possible for the human mind to conceive him. To the same emanations the Kabbalists give other titles, which constantly present themselves in Gnostic inscriptions. For example, the *Crown* (Parmenides also calls the Godhead Στέφανος) has the synonym of *Or*, "Light," (possibly the same with *Our*, the name of a Sabean genius). *Wisdom* is called *Nous* and *Logos*, and is equivalent to the *Sophia* of Gnosticism; she has also the names of *Fear*, *Depth of thought*, *Eden*, according to the several passions that animate her. *Prudence* is the "river flowing out of Paradise, the fountain of the oil of unction." *Magnificence* has for symbol a lion's head; *Severity*, a red and black fire; *Beauty*, the colours green and yellow; the symbol of *Beauty* is an illuminating mirror; *Victory* is Jehovah Sabaoth, having for symbol the pillar on the right hand, called *Jachin; Glory* has the left pillar *Boaz*, called likewise the "Old Serpent," and sometimes "Cherubim and Seraphim;" this principle answers to the genius *Ophis* of the Gnostic systems. "Jachin" and "Boaz" signify Strength and Power: they figure conspicuously in the symbolism of the secret societies of modern times; and naturally so, for these *illuminati* have borrowed (probably without understanding it) all the terminology of the Valentinians and the Kabbalists. "Foundation" becomes the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil: also Noah, Solomon, and the Messiah—all which titles merely express the eternal alliance existing between the Supreme and all that emanates from him, and in virtue whereof he brings back into himself all the souls that have lost their original purity. "Empire" is the Consuming Fire, the wife of the Church—all three titles being also employed in the Valentinian system.

The relationship of the "Sephiroth," or Æons, to one another the Kabbalists represent by a number of *circles* intersecting in a mysterious manner *ad infinitum;* or again, by the figure of a *Man*, orof a *Tree*, made up of such circles. The figure of the Man, *Seir-Anpin*, consists of two hundred and forty-three numbers,

bers, being the numerical value of the letters in the name *Abram*, and signifying the different orders in the celestial hierarchy. The first idea of this type was possibly borrowed from the Hindoo figure of Brahma and the several types typified by the different parts of his body, to which mystical values are still attached by the Hindoos.

The ten Sephiroth served as *types* or models for the visible Creation; and from them emanated the Four Worlds, Aziluth, B'riah, Jezirah, and Asiah; each world successively proceeding out of the one above it, and each in succession *enveloping* its superior. A theory this, possibly borrowed from Plato's description of the arrangement of the seven spheres, as given in the "Vision of Er," at the end of his "Republic," where he compares them to a set of the hemispherical bowls used by jugglers, fitting into, and moving loosely within, each other (lib. x. 614B, *seq.*).

These Four Worlds become less pure as they descend in the series; the least pure of all being the *material* world. But nothing is entirely *material*, for all subsists through God, the ray of his light penetrating through all creation being the Life of the life, and consequently "all is God." This universal *All* is divided into thirty-two "Gates," the elements or energies out of which all beings are formed.

The world *Aziluth* is inhabited by the Parsuphaim, the purest emanations of the Deity, having nothing material in their composition. *B'riah* is possessed by an inferior order, who are the servants of Aziluth, although still immaterial creatures. Still lower are the inhabitants of *Jezirah*, to which world belong the Cherubim and Seraphim, the Elohim and the Benê-Elohim. But *Asiah* is peopled by gross material existences of both sexes, the Klippoth delighting in evil, whose chief is Belial. These last beings are full of ambition, and ever at war with the pure spirits of the superior worlds, whose empire they unceasingly endeavour to usurp.

The three superior orders just described answer to the Amshaspands, Izeds, and Fravashis, of Zoroaster; as do the Klippoth, in their vast numbers and malicious nature, to his Devs. This discord did not exist in the beginning, it was the

result of a revolution in heaven, called the "Fall of the Seven Kings," from whom* the Creator, as a punishment, extracted the principle of good and light, and bestowed it upon the inhabitants of the three superior spheres.

This last notion is common to many forms of Gnosticism. The Ophites make Achamoth extract from Ildabaoth and his six sons the inherent ray of Divine Light, in order to bestow it upon Man. Again, the Pistis-Sophia represents two great angels, Melchisedech and Zorocothora (*gatherer of light*) making their annual rounds through the rebellious "Æons of the sphere" (zodiacal signs), and *squeezing* out of them all the rays of Divine Light that are still left in their composition, which having been all extracted, the fulness of time and the kingdom of heaven are come; and so, according to the Kabbala, when the contest shall have endured for the space ordained from the beginning of the world, the Supreme shall deliver the spirits in Asiah from their material envelope, shall strengthen the feeble ray of his light that is within them, and shall establish its pristine harmony throughout all Creation.

The *Human Soul* is composed of all parts borrowed from each of these four worlds. From Asiah it gets the *Nephesh*, or seat of the physical appetites; from Jezirah the *Ruach*, or seat of the passions, from Briah the *Neshamah* or reason, and from Aziluth it obtains the *Chaiah*, or principle of spiritual life. This looks like an adaptation of the Platonic theory of the soul's obtaining its respective faculties from the Planets in its downward progress through their spheres. But the Pistis-Sophia, with its accustomed boldness, puts this theory into a much more poetical

* The author of the Book of Enoch alludes to the same legend: "Over these fountains also I perceived a place which had neither the firmament of heaven above it, nor the solid ground underneath it; neither was there water above it, nor any thing on wing, but the spot was desolate. And then I beheld *seven stars* like great blazing mountains, and like spirits entreating me. Then the Angel said, this place until the consummation of heaven and earth will be the prison of the stars and the host of heaven. The stars which roll over fire are those who transgressed the commandments of God before their time arrived, for they came not in their proper season. Therefore was he offended with them, and bound them until the consummation of their crimes in the secret year."—Chap. xviii.

shape (§ 282). The *Inner Man* is similarly made up of *four* constituents, but these are supplied by the rebellious Æons of the Sphere, being the *Power* (a particle of the Divine light ("Divinæ particula auræ") yet left in themselves); the *Soul* "formed out of the tears of their eyes, and the sweat of their torments"; the Ἀντιμῖμον Πνεύματος *Counterfeit of the Spirit* (seemingly answering to our *Conscience*); and lastly the Μοῖρα *Fate*, whose business it is to lead the man to the end appointed for him; "if he hath to die by the fire, to lead him into the fire; if he hath to die by a wild beast, to lead him unto the wild beast, &c." But in truth the entire system of this most wondrous Gospel is a mixture of the Kabbala with the ideas of Magian astrology, clouded under the terminology of the old Egyptian creed, to which belong its "Triple Powers," "Invisible Gods," and "the Proper Forms" assigned by it to the different Æons.

All the human race having sinned in the First Man, that is as regards their *souls*, all which were necessarily *contained within* his soul at the time of the Fall, these souls are exiled hither into prisons of Matter, called bodies, in order to expiate their sin, and to exercise themselves in good during their residence on earth. Such as upon quitting the body are not found sufficiently purified for entrance into Aziluth, have to recommence their penance in this world. Hence the question of the Disciples whether a man's being *born* blind were the punishment for his *own* sins, which on this supposition must have been committed by him in a *previous* life. This penitential transmigration of souls forms a very conspicuous feature in the doctrine set forth in the Pistis-Sophia. The wicked, after undergoing torment for periods nicely apportioned to their deserts, in prisons belonging to the several Infernal Powers, are sent into this world again to inhabit human bodies afflicted in different ways—lame, blind, or sunk in abject poverty. Similarly the righteous, but *unregenerate*, man is provided with a fresh body wherein to avail himself of the *sacraments* of the new religion; which in his former life he had neglected through ignorance, and not wilfully.

The nature of God, and of Man, is therefore the subject of the Kabbala; the Government of the Creation is set forth in the

Talmud, the doctrine of which concerning the *Nature of the Angels* is extremely important for the understanding of much in Gnosticism. The whole system in this particular is borrowed from the Zendavesta; and could not have originated *before*, or indeed *without* the Captivity, so opposite is the spirit pervading it to the genius of the Mosaic Law. According to it, the government of all things is entrusted to the Angels, of whom there are seventy Princes, watching over each element, nation, and language. Thus, Jehuel is the Prince of *Fire*, and has under him seven subordinates: Seraphiel, Gabriel, Uriel, Temanael, Shimsael, Hadranael, and Samiel. Again, Michael is Prince of *Water*, and similarly attended by seven inferior spirits. Moreover, there are an infinity of Angels yet lower in degree, guardians of the various animals, plants, heat, winds, rains, &c. There also are others presiding over the passions of the soul, fear, grace, favour, love, and so on. Hence it is not to be wondered at, that the Angel who directs the course of the sun should have under him no less than two hundred and ninety-six hosts, whose sum is expressed by the numerical letters in the word *Haaretz* "the earth." The head of them is Metatron, the "number of his name" being three hundred and fourteen, and therefore equivalent to that of *Shaddai*, "the Almighty." Metatron is the Persian Mithras; the names of the others are all compounded with *El* "God," and contain his titles, or invocations to him.* All this celestial roll-call fully explains St. Paul's warning to his flock at Colossae against being reduced into a "voluntary (that is, an uncalled for) humility, and the worshipping of Angels," whilst the copious appearance of their names upon talismans strongly testifies to the veneration in which their power was held.

This last circumstance was a necessity of the case, for all these monuments proceed from two sources—the two great schools of Magi mentioned by Pliny, the most ancient, the

* The Book of Enoch thus states the names and offices of the "Angels who watch": Uriel presides over clamour and terror; Raphael over the spirits of men; Ragiel inflicts punishment on the world and the luminaries; Michael, who presides over human virtue, commands the nations. Sarakiel over the spirits of the children of men who transgress; Gabriel over Ikisat, over Paradise, and over the Cherubim.

Chaldean, founded by Zoroaster and Orthanes, the *modern* of his own day, by Moses and Jambres. So Juvenal, after bringing in the proud and pompous Chaldean, the maker of emperors—

> "Cujus amicitia conducendaque tabella
> Magnus civis obit, et formidatus Othoni," (vi. 557–8.)

makes the poor trembling Jewess fortune-teller steal in with whispers for the lady's private ear—her profession going no further than the interpreting or the vending of dreams—"Qualiacunque voles Judæi somnia vendent." Such nocturnal revelations, we are told, were to be procured by sleeping with the proper talisman put under one's pillow. Thus, a writer on magic quoted by Camillo di Leonardo, lays down that "a woman with her hair hanging down loose, and a man approaching her making a gesture of love, engraved upon a crystal, or jacinth, being placed under the head upon going to sleep, will make one see in a dream whatsoever one desires." *

Such being the nature of the case, the existing productions of Gnosticism will be most appropriately investigated in the present Treatise by considering the nature of the various sources from which they emanated. The series commences with the *Mithraic*, as being the most ancient in origin, and in which the Magian and the Jewish Kabbalistic ideas are found the most frequently united. To this class succeed the *Abraxas-gems*, properly so-called, in which the Magian ground-work is modified by the refinements of Basilides, introducing a strong tincture of the primitive Egyptian theology. To Egypt herself more properly belong the *Agathodæmon* talismans bearing the figure of the good serpent, Chnuphis—an emblem which gave its name to that very wide-spreading and clearly defined sect, the *Ophites*. Last of all come the innumerable relics of the

* And again, the "sigil of a man having a long face and beard, and eyebrows raised, seated upon a plough, and holding a fox and vulture, with four men lying upon his neck; such a gem being placed under your head when asleep, makes you dream of treasures, and of the right manner of finding them." Also, "Cepheus, a man girt with a sword, having his hands and legs extended, is held by Aries, and placed in the north. It is of the nature of Saturn and Jupiter, makes the wearer cautious and prudent; and put under the head of a sleeping person makes him see delightful visions."

worship of *Serapis*, that most recent of all the gods in the Egyptian Pantheon, and in which the Brahminical influence is most distinctly to be traced. This last subject, so curious in itself, shall be the subject of the following section, where the numerous facts brought forward may perhaps serve to remove some of the incredulity with which such a thesis will naturally at first be regarded.

Fig. 2.

INDIAN SOURCES OF GNOSTICISM.—MANES.

The *Persian* origin of so considerable a portion of the Gnosis having been set forth in the foregoing pages, it remains to show what portion is due to a purely *Indian* source, and to indicate the channels through which a direct intercourse was carried on between the farthest east and the foci of Gnosticism, Alexandria and Ephesus. For the Christian Gnosis was indirectly the daughter of the Hindoo Gnosis, such as it was taught in the various mysteries; possibly in the Eleusinian and the Phrygian. For universal tradition made the first founder of mysteries, Bacchus, bring them direct from India; and Jove's μῆρος, the fabled birth-place of the god, may have been no other than Mount *Meru*, the Olympus of the Hindoo Pantheon.*

Certain Gnostic tenets concerning the duality of the Divine emanations, absorption into the god-head, asceticism, penance, and self-collection, are identical with the Buddhistic teaching upon the same points; of which agreement several remarkable examples will be adduced in their fitting place. But we are not left to mere conjecture on this point, for the actual circumstances of their importation from India are minutely detailed, in one case that doubtless had many parallels, by the laborious Epiphanius in his "Life of Manes," (Hæres. lxv.).†

This celebrated heresiarch, equally abhorrent to Zoroastrian and Christian orthodoxy, was by birth a Persian, named Cubricus; but who upon commencing his mission assumed the title of *Manes*, signifying in the Babylonian tongue "The Vessel," for the same reason, we may suppose, that Dante gives to St. Paul the epithet "Vas Electionis." This Cubricus had

* The bearer of the phallus (lingam) in the grand Dionysian procession celebrated by Ptolemy Philadelphus, was blackened all over with soot, doubtless to indicate the native country of that very equivocal symbol.

† The earliest authority, however, (drawn upon by Epiphanius also), is the "Disputation of Archelaus and Manes," held at Charrae in A.D. 275–9. This book was written in Syriac, but is only extant in a Latin version.

been slave, and subsequently sole heir, to a certain wealthy widow who had inherited all the effects belonging to one Terminthus, surnamed in *Assyrian* "Buddas." This Terminthus had similarly been the slave of a rich Saracen merchant, Scythicus, who had studied the Greek language and literature in some place on the borders of Palestine (perhaps the school of Palmyra), and who "had there attained to eminence in the empty learning of this world." By constant journeys between his home and *India*, this Scythicus had amassed a large fortune. With this he settled down in Hypsele in the Thebaid, where he married a beautiful courtezan, whom he had bought and emancipated. "Here, out of sheer idleness and licentiousness, he set up to preach new doctrines, not derived from Scripture but from mere human reason."

These doctrines, from the nature of the case, can hardly have been of his own concoction, but, in all probability, things that he had picked up in India, where all the ancient emporia lay on the Guzerat Coast, the seat of the powerful Jaina (Buddhist) monarchy. A mere Eastern trader, a common Arab merchant who, after making his fortune by long and dangerous travels in the East, who could afterwards in advanced life set himself down to study, nay more, to attain *proficiency* in the Greek philosophy, must have been a man of no ordinary intellect. Assuredly it was not the mere want of anything better to do, (as his malicious biographer asserts), that made him turn preacher of a new religion. His marriage with the enfranchised courtezan looks like a theological addition, added to the portrait for the sake of so completing his resemblance to Simon Magus. The nature of the doctrines he was likely to imbibe in the great Indian marts, Baroche, Barcellore, Pultaneh, or in the semi-Grecian cities of Bactria, is attested to this day by the innumerable *Buddhist* temples and topes, with their deposit of relics yet studding the provinces this side of the Indus; and whose contents declare the flourishing state of that religion even when the country had passed under the rule of the Sassanian Kings of Persia.

But to return to Scythicus in his retirement: "Taking Pythagoras for guide, he composed four books, namely, 'The

Mysteries,' 'The Summary,' 'The Gospel,' and 'The Treasuries.'" (Pythagoras was then universally believed to have visited India, and there to have obtained the elements of his philosophy, which has a certain Brahminical character.) "After this, Scythicus made a journey to Jerusalem in the very times of the Apostles, and held conferences with the elders of the church upon the Origin of Evil, and such like points. But not being satisfied by their explanations, he took to preaching magic, the knowledge of which he had gotten along with his other wares from the *Indians* and *Egyptians*. But as he was showing off a miracle upon the roof of his house, he fell down and was killed. Upon this, his servant and sole disciple, Terminthus, instead of returning to his mistress at Hypsele, ran off with his money into Persia, where, in order to escape detection, he assumed the name of *Buddas*, which signifies "Wise." (This last fact proves incontestably the nature of the doctrines he and his master had been gathering up in their Indian travels; and the truth lying at the bottom of this story seems to be that he gave himself out for a *fresh incarnation* of Buddha, of which there had been *seven** before his date.)

"This Terminthus was himself a man of learning and conversant with his master's four treatises. He lodged in the house of a widow, where he used to hold conferences with the priests of Mithras, especially with two, Parcus and Labdacus, upon the Two Principles, and similar subjects. He, too, having been killed by *accident*, like his master, his landlady kept possession of all his baggage, religious books included; and in her turn bequeathed them to her servant Cubricus, the afterwards so celebrated Manes."

It is necessary here to point out a certain violent anachronism in the story as told by Epiphanius. If Scythicus visited Jerusalem at all, he must have done so *before* the year of its destruction, A.D. 70. His disciple, Terminthus, could therefore not have survived far into the second century. The landlady of the latter could for this reason have hardly had for slave Manes, who flourished about two hundred years later. It is,

* The seventh having been that Sakyal who, from Benares, diffused Buddhism all over the peninsula.

however, possible that the works plagiarised by Manes had been preserved in her *family* down to the period of his service in it.

In this history of Scythicus, however disguised by tradition, we have at one view the complete history of the rise and progress of Gnosticism. We find an Arab merchant of a subtle and inquiring mind, occupying himself during his long and frequent sojourns at the Indian marts in studying the philosophy of these prevailing religionists, the speculations of the Buddhist monks, and equally investigating the secrets of the "wisdom of Egypt," when detained at the other head-quarters of the Eastern trade. Then retiring from business, he goes to Palmyra for the purpose of studying Grecian philosophy, as then taught in its school, which philosophy would be no other than Neo-Platonism; thence returning home, he occupies his leisure in reducing to one harmonious system the numerous conflicting theories upon subjects too high for human knowledge, which he had so laboriously collected from the three great fountains of philosophy—India, Egypt, and Athens.

Finally attracted by the fame of a new religion that professed to throw the clearest light upon all things relating to God and Man, being preached at Jerusalem, he immediately starts for the *focus* of this new light, leaving behind him wife and property, only accompanied by one servant, himself an educated man, and his own treasured theological speculations. On his arriving at the Holy City, we find him (as might be expected from his previous training) grievously disappointed in his hopes of at last obtaining the solution of all the problems that had so long occupied his thoughts—for on subjects of that kind the Christian Presbyters could tell no more than what he had learnt already from the *Rabbis* of Alexandria, or the Jaina monks of Guzerat. Thus disappointed, he appears to have set up himself for a teacher of a new and higher doctrine, supporting his pretensions (after the customary fashion of the times) by miracle-working; and as a matter of course getting his career speedily cut short, for Jerusalem was not the place where a new religion would be promulgated with impunity by a single indi-

vidual, and that too an *Arabian*. His disciple, Terminthus, taking warning by his fate, resolves to try another school of profound wisdom, formed from time immemorial, but as yet unvisited by his master, and proceeds to hold discussion with the Wise Men of the East at their head college in Babylon, seeking for the final solution of his difficulties in the doctrine of Zoroaster. It is very probable that he, as the result of this study, engrafted upon the system of Scythicus whatever features of the Zendavesta appeared to him the most satisfactory, and consistent best with his preconceived ideas of the truth. It would be interesting to know whether he shaped all these fresh acquisitions into conformity with the original Indian groundwork of his master's system. As already observed, such appears to have been his course from the title that he assumed, declaring himself an eighth "Buddha," successor to the famous Guatama, founder of the religion, and like him commissioned to teach a new way of salvation. Terminthus, like his master, came to an untimely end. The Magi were not members of a powerful establishment who would suffer themselves to be puzzled and confuted by an over-wise foreigner, disputing so boldly—

> "Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and Fate,
> Fixed Fate, freewill, foreknowledge absolute,"

still less to allow him to go off exulting in his victory, as his asserted follower Manes likewise found to his cost.

Manes himself appears to have belonged to the order of Magi (probably being admitted after gaining his freedom and changing his name), for he is reported to have been famous for his skill in astrology, medicine, magic, and *painting!* This last is curious; it shows that the Magi, like the mediæval monks, monopolised the arts as well as the sciences of their times. Whether he conceived the scheme from the accidental acquisition of the writings of Scythicus or not (M. Matter supposes him to have got his first inspiration from some Egyptian Basilidan who had found his way into Persia), certain it is that he first gave to these notions a definite shape, and constructed his system with such skill that it spread not merely all over the East but throughout Europe. In the latter region its im-

portance is evinced by the fact (mentioned incidentally by Ammianus) that Constantine himself, before finally changing his religion, following the Apostolical precept "Try all things, hold fast that which is good," carefully studied the Manichæan system under the guidance of the learned Musonianus, whom we must suppose to have been a great doctor of the sect.* Nay more, this religion, after long seeming extinction from the pertinacious persecution of the Byzantine emperors, again blazed forth with extraordinary lustre in the Paulicianism of the Middle Ages.

The grand purpose of the scheme of Manes was the *reconcilement* of the two religions, which had by that time come to dispute the empire of the world—the flourishing, though still unrecognised Christianity of Rome, and the equally vigorous but newly revived Zoroastrism of Sassanian Persia. Calling himself the "Promised Paraclete," Manes accepted the gospel, but only after purifying it from all taint of Judaism, whilst he utterly rejected the Old Testament. But whilst Zoroaster makes all to *begin* in the *harmony*, and to *end* in the mutual reconciliation of the Two Principles, Manes declares these Two Principles immutable and existent from all eternity as they shall continue for ever to exist. His *Good* is Zoroaster's "Lord of Light"; but his *Bad* is Satan-Matter, deliverance from whose bondage is to be obtained only through the strictest asceticism. From the Christian Church he borrowed its institution of presbyters and deacons, being sensible how greatly that organisation had conduced to its rapid development, and in his own enterprise it met with almost equal success. Manes was a genuine Pantheist, teaching that God pervaded all things, even plants (of which tenet I subjoin a singular illustration from his once ardent follower, St. Augustine); he also adopted the entire theory of Emanations, exactly

* "Constantinus enim cum limatius superstitionum quæreret sectas, Manichæorum et similium, nec interpres inveniretur idoneus, hunc sibi commendatum ut sufficientem elegit; quem officio functum perite Musonianum voluit appellari ante Strategium dictitatum." Ammianus xv. 6. The sainted Emperor's eulogists have carefully hushed up this trait of an inquiring spirit, anxious to weigh the relative merits of the existing rivals of Catholicism.

as it was defined in the older Gnostic systems. St. Augustine's words are ('Confessions' iii. 10): "And I, not understanding this, used to mock at those holy servants and prophets of thine.* And what was I doing when I mocked at them, except that I myself was mocked at by thee, being seduced gently and by degrees into such absurdities as to believe that the fig weeps when it is plucked, and likewise its parent tree, with tears of milk? Which same fig, however, should any holy man eat, that is to say, after it has been plucked through the *sin* of another, not by his own, he would mingle with his bowels, and breathe out of it *angels*, nay more, particles of God himself, in his sighs and eructations whilst praying, which same particles of the Supreme and True God would have been bound up in that fruit, had they not been set at liberty by the tooth and stomach of the chosen saint; and I, like a wretch, believed that greater compassion ought to be shown unto the fruits of the earth than to man, for whose sake they were created. For if any one not a Manichæan, being an hungered, should ask for the same, it would have been thought a crime, worthy of capital punishment, if a single mouthful thereof were given to him." Compare the following rule of the Buddhist priesthood: "They will not kill any animal, neither root up nor cut any plant, because they think it has life." ('Ayeen Akbari,' p. 435.)

Manes invented a theory of salvation, so very whimsical that it ought to be inserted here, to recreate the wanderer in this dreary and dusky theological labyrinth. "When the Son came into the world to effect the redemption of mankind, he contrived a machine containing twelve bowls (cadi),† which being made to revolve by the motion of the spheres, attracts into itself the souls of the dying. These the *Great Luminary* (the sun) takes and purifies with his rays, and then transfers to the moon; and this is the method whereby the *disk*, as we call it, of the moon is replenished." Epiphanius triumphantly refutes this theory

* Alluding to the Manichæan rejection of the Old Testament as a divine revelation.

† In the notion of this machine may be traced the influence of the study of Plato in the school of Palmyra, for it is unmistakably borrowed from the eight concentric basins set in motion, one inside the other, by the fingers of the Fates, so minutely described in the Vision of Er the Pamphylian.

by asking how the moon's disk was replenished during the nine hundred years that elapsed after the Creation before any deaths took place?

But the career of this inventive heresiarch was speedily brought to a close. The Persian king, Varanes I. (about the year 275), alarmed by the rapid spread of these new doctrines, convoked a General Council of the Magi to sit in judgment upon them; by whom the unlucky apostle was pronounced a heretic, and a traitor to his own brethren, and sentenced to be flayed alive.

BUDDHISM.

For the sake of comparison with the above-described systems, all based upon the doctrine of successive *Emanations* from One First Principle, the means of escaping from the bondage of Matter, and the struggles of the souls towards ultimate absorption into its original source, I shall subjoin a very brief sketch of the principal features of the Buddhistic theosophy.* Here also we find a First Buddha in his proper state of eternal repose (the *Indolentia* of Epicurus) corresponding to the Zoroastrian "Boundless Time," and the Valentinian "Bythos." While in this state termed "Nevriti," wishing to create the universe he produced the *Five* divine Buddhas, the makers of the Elements, who in their turn produced the Five Buddhasativas, and by their agency created the material world. The grand aim of this religion is to effect the release of the soul from its connection with *Matter*. All things, according to the Buddhists, exist only in *illusion*, consequently they can only return into non-existence or repose by means of *True Knowledge* (compare the *Gnosis* we

* Buddhism was founded in the fifth century before our era, by Sakya Muni, son of the Raja of Kapila. At the age of twenty-nine he began to study religion, and by force of prayer became the embodiment of the Supreme Deity when thirty-five years old. He chose Benares for the centre of his mission, whence in the space of forty-five years his doctrines were diffused over the fairest districts of the Ganges from the Delta to Agra and Cawnpore. His death is placed by some writers in B.C. 477

are considering).* "Illusion" is the belief in the reality of the eternal world; the degradation of the soul towards Matter is the effect of a succession of acts; and therefore its release is effected by relinquishing the belief in the reality of external objects.

The Buddhists of Nepal, who have preserved the original doctrines of the religion in their greatest purity, teach the following cosmogony: Padnapani, one of the original Five Emanations, created Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, or the Principles of Creation, Preservation, and Destruction. Adi-Buddha first created thirteen mansions for his own eternal abode, and for the dwelling-place after death of Buddha's followers. Below these are eighteen mansions made by Brahma; lower yet are six made by Vishnu; and lowest of all—three, the work of Siva. These three series of abodes receive the souls of the followers of their respective creators.

Below all these lie the mansions of the Planetary gods, Indra and Chandra; and after these there comes the Earth floating upon the face of the waters like a boat. Below these waters are the Seven Patala, or regions of Hell, the abode of evil spirits and the damned. This arrangement presents the most striking resemblance to the construction of the Ophite Diagramma (to be given further on), which Origen has described from the original, and which M. Matter has reconstructed from Origen's description to illustrate his treatise in his Plate X.

The promulgation of these Indian speculations from so remote a source—a difficulty at first sight insurmountable—may nevertheless be readily explained. The spirit of this religion was the spirit of proselytism; the Buddhists from the very beginning sent out their missionaries (some of whose narratives, full of interest, are extant and have been translated from the Chinese) with all the zeal of the old Propaganda. From the

* The Buddhist "Confession of Faith," regularly set up in the temples, engraven on a stone tablet, runs thus: "Of all things proceeding from Cause their causes hath the Tathâgatha explained. The Great Sarmana hath likewise explained the causes of the cessation of existence." The essence of the religion therefore is Perfect Knowledge; the object of Virgil's aspiration—

"Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas."

mainland they converted Ceylon, Japan, and the recesses of Tartary; and penetrated into regions where their former presence and tolerated existence are now little dreamed of.* That Buddhism had been actually planted in the dominions of the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies (Palestine belonging to the former) before the end of the fourth century, at least, before our era is shown by a clause in the Edicts of Asoka. This prince was grandson to Chandragupta (the Sandracottus of the Greeks, contemporary and friend of Seleucus I.), who, at the head of an army of 60,000 men, had conquered all India within the Ganges. Asoka, at first a licentious tyrant, had embraced the newly preached doctrines of Buddhism, a Brahminical Protestantism, and propagated them by persuasion and by force through the length and breadth of his immense kingdom, with all the usual zeal of a new convert.

The Edicts referred to are graven on a rock tablet at Girnur in Guzerat. To quote the words of the Indian Archæologist Prinsep, to whom the discovery is due, (article xvii. 'Indian Antiquities'). "I am now about to produce evidence that Asoka's† acquaintance with geography was not limited to Asia, and that his expansive benevolence towards living creatures extended, at least in intention, to another quarter of the globe, that his religious ambition sought to *apostolize Egypt*, and that we must look hereafter for traces of the introduction of Buddhism into the fertile valley of the Nile, so productive of metaphysical discussions from the earliest ages. The line which I allude to is the fifth from the bottom. 'And the Greek King (Yoniraja)‡ besides, by whom the Chapta (Egyptian) Kings, Ptole-

* Two Chinese pilgrims, Fa Hian and Hiouen Thsang, visited Benares at the beginning of the fifth, and at the middle of the seventh centuries of our era. These keen and sagacious observers have left records of their travels in India of the utmost importance to the historian and antiquary. Their narratives are, for the most part, plain matter-of-fact productions, free from the haze and uncertainty of Hindoo writings; and whenever they have been tested by extraneous evidence, have been found to be to a large extent singularly correct. See 'Mémoires de Hiouen Thsang,' translated from the Chinese by Stanislas Julien.

† Asoka's zeal was so ardent that he sent his son and daughter, Mahendra and Saugamitra, as missionaries to Ceylon; who in a short time effected the conversion of the island to their new religion.

‡ The Persian envoy in Aristophanes' Acharnians used the same word, 'Ιαόναν, for the Greek nation.

maios, and Gonkakenos (Antigonus Gonatas) have been induced to allow that both here and in *foreign countries everywhere* the people may follow the doctrine of the religion of Devanipya, wheresoever it reacheth.'" The "Essenes," so like to Buddhist Monks in many particulars (for which see the minute description of this ascetic rule as given by Josephus, 'Antiq. Jud.' xv. 10), had been established on the shores of the Dead Sea for "thousands of ages" before Pliny's time. "On the West its shores, so far as they are unhealthy, are shunned by the Esseni, a solitary race, and wonderful beyond all others on the globe; without woman, renouncing all usual enjoyment, without money, associates of the palm-trees, from day to day they are recruited by the flocks of new-comers: all those flocking in numerously whom the world drives from itself, all tempest-tossed by the waves of fortune. In this way, incredible to tell, the race wherein no birth ever takes place, has endured for thousands of years, so prolific for them is other people's disgust at the world" (Hist. Nat. v. 15). The great Naturalist's "thousands of years" must be allowed as one of his favourite oratorical tropes, but nevertheless serves for testimony to the belief in the great antiquity of the sect. Perhaps they may have been a continuation of those early ascetic associations known as the "Schools of the Prophets."

The influence of Jewish Essenism upon primitive Christianity (as to rules of life at least) is a thing that will not be disputed by any who have read, with a wish to *learn* the truth, not to *evade it*, the account of it given by Josephus. But over the semi-Christian Gnostics of Syria such long-established authority must have had a still stronger influence. It is easy to discover how the source of the slavish notions about the merits of asceticism, penances, and self-torture (of which Simon Stylites is the most conspicuous illustration), was the same one whence the Indian fakirs drew their practice—for even in their methods they were identical. Simon's celebrated life-penance (which gives him his title), undergone upon the summit of a lofty pillar, had been practised in the same regions many generations before his time. The pseudo-Lucian, in his amusing description of the famous Temple of the "Syrian

Goddess" at Emesa ('De Dea Syria'), particularly notices the phallus or obelisk, 300 feet high, planted in front of the edifice, upon the apex of which the devotee sat without sleep for one and twenty days and nights, keeping himself awake by constantly ringing a handbell. Ideas like these pervade the Christianity of the Lower Empire, nay, they constitute the very essence of the religion. Neither is it difficult to see upon how many points Manes, with his rigid Buddhistic tenets, came into collision with the humane and rational law of Zoroaster (the brightest system of natural religion ever promulgated), and what good causes Varanes, with his spiritual advisers, had for condemning his heresy.

In our investigation of this particular subject it must never be forgotten that so long as *philosophy* was cultivated in Greece, (even from the times of the Samian sage, inventor of the name), India was often regarded as the ultimate and purest source of the "True Wisdom," the knowledge of things divine. Even so late as Lucian's time, the middle of the second century, that author concludes his evidently true history of Antiphilus and Demetrius, by making the latter, a cynic philosopher by profession, resign all his property to his friend, and depart for India, there to end his life amongst the Brachmanes, ('Toxaris,' 34). In the same century the well-known pilgrimage of Apollonius of Tyana, and his deep conference with the Indian philosophers, as recorded by his companion Damis, go to prove the same thing; and although the meagre journal of the sage's travelling companion may have been largely supplemented and embellished by the fancy of his editor, Philostratus,* the main features of the narrative are doubtless authentic. The great thaumaturgist's proceedings, as there detailed, show how the apparent difficulty of such a pilgrimage vanishes upon a better knowledge of the circumstances. Apollonius presents himself, first of all, to the Parthian King, Bardanes (a "Philhellene" as he yet boasts himself upon his coinage), and as warm an admirer of Grecian *savants* as any of his Achæmenian pre-

* Who composed his very interesting 'Life of Apollonius' at the request of the Empress Julia, about a century after the death of the philosopher.

decessors, from whom he obtains a *firman* securing to him protection and entertainment, everywhere within the limits of his rule, which extended then, probably, as far as the Indus. Thenceforward his letters of recommendation from the "King of Kings" to the various native princes his allies, secure to the traveller an equally favourable reception. A safe and regular communication between the extreme points of the Persian Empire had been from the beginning the great care of its mighty rulers (the first institutors of highways, posting-stages, and post-horses), passing through what was not, as now, a series of deserts infested by robber-tribes, but a populous and well-cultivated country; so favoured, with a passport from the sovereign, the pilgrim would find his journey both expeditious and agreeable.

The same facilities were necessarily made use of by the natives of Hindustan. It is curious to observe how the occasional "Brachman" who found his way into Greece was received as a model philosopher—like that Zarmanes Chagan, who, coming from Bargose (*Baroche*), finally burnt himself alive upon a pyre at Athens, in the reign of Augustus; of which edifying spectacle Nicolaus Damascenus was eye-witness (Strabo XV.). Before him, we have Calanas the "gymnosophist" (a happy Greek expression for *fakir*) in high repute at Alexander's court, and who similarly chose to leave earth in a "chariot of fire." Their example was followed by the "Peregrinus Proteus," so happily ridiculed by Lucian in his book thus entitled; Proteus, to give his apotheosis as much celebrity as possible, chose for its scene the occasion of the Olympic games. This last worthy had been a philosopher, then a Christian teacher, and lastly had started a new religion of his own invention. That the sect so celebrated by the ancients under the name of "Brachmanes" was *Buddhistic*, not *Brahminical*, may be inferred from their locality, Bactria; and yet more from a circumstance mentioned by Strabo (Book XV.). He speaks of their devoting thirty years to the study of Theology, living in a community (a *vihar* or monastery), sequestered from the world in the midst of forests in the neighbourhood of the different cities, and totally abstaining from sexual intercourse,

and all animal food; on the contrary, the Brahmins hold that to leave children behind them is a most sacred duty, and one upon which their admission into heaven depends. Whether the Buddhists be the true representatives of the primal religion* of their country, or only the *Reformers* of the more ancient Brahminical Church, it is the natural weapon of all dissenters from an established creed, to ridicule and even to pronounce damnable, the favourite tenets of their adversaries. Witness Martin Luther with his invectives against vows of virginity, and his well-known motto

> "Wer nicht liebt Weib, Wein und Gesang,
> Der bleibt ein Narr sein Leben lang."

Similarly we find the Essenes running counter to the ancient prejudices of their nation, and spontaneously embracing what the Mosaic Law had denounced as the greatest of curses—the leaving no offspring behind to keep up their name in Israel.

To exemplify the severe discipline maintained in the Brahman communities, Strabo mentions that the mere act of blowing the nose, or spitting, caused the offender to be excluded for that day, as *incontinent*, from the society of his fellow-recluses. Similarly Josephus particularises, amongst other Essenian rules, the obligation of abstaining from all natural evacuations upon the Sabbath day. But even *their* rigour is surpassed, and in our day too, by a certain sect of Indian Yogis, who profess to have completely emancipated themselves from all such defiling necessities of nature. This they effect by living entirely upon milk, which, after retaining a short time in the stomach, they throw up again by swallowing a ball fastened to a string; and maintain the animal expenditure solely through the nutriment imbibed by the system during the continuance of the liquid in the stomach; and which consequently leaves no residuum to descend into the lower bowels. A doctrine this, the finest

* Which of course their theologians claim to be, and treat the Brahmins as corrupters of the true faith. For example Hiouen Thsang: "They reckon (in the kingdom of Benares) a hundred temples of gods, inhabited by about ten thousand *heretics*, who for the most part are worshippers of Siva." And yet he candidly owns that the Buddhists possessed no more than thirty monasteries, numbering only three thousand members, in the same place.

possible *reductio ad absurdam* of the notion of meritorious continence, and exhibiting on the ludicrous side the mischief of being too logical in matters of religion.

As for the profundity of the philosophical speculations of the Orientals, even at a very late period, the Byzantine Agathias quotes a very remarkable example. Chosroes (better known to us as Nushirwan the Just), besides giving an asylum, as to his brethren, to the last Athenian philosophers, when expelled from their chairs by the stupid bigot Justinian, caused all Plato's works to be translated into Persian, and professed to be himself able to comprehend even the mysteries of the 'Timæus.' The Greek sophist is naturally indignant at the impudence of the foreigner who could pretend that "his own barbarous and rustic language" was capable of expressing the divine thoughts of the Athenian sage; for he little suspected that the great King, or at any rate the Magi and "Sufis" about him, were masters of the sources whence Plato may have ultimately drawn his inspiration whilst planning that inscrutable composition. The religious instruction of the Persian princes had from the beginning been carefully attended to, and proficiency therein was a matter of pride: thus Cyrus the younger puts forward his superior knowledge of Theology (in his manifesto upon claiming the kingdom) as a just cause why he should be preferred to his elder brother.

Leaving out of the question the now received theory as to the immigration of the "Indo-Germanic" race into the farthest recesses of Europe, modern history furnishes the example of extensive migration, effected under infinitely greater difficulties, by the hordes of low-caste Hindoos, who, flying from the invasion of Tamerlane, spread themselves all over Europe as Gipsies, still retaining their native language and habits, and to the present day claiming "Sind" or "Sindha" for their national name.

The facts adduced in the foregoing sketch will suffice to indicate the manner in which the germs of the various Gnostic doctrines were imported from the East, how they were engrafted upon previously existing notions, and how vigorously they flourished when transplanted into the kindly soil of Alexandria and Ephesus. To complete the general view of the subject,

before proceeding to consider the tangible monuments left us by these ideas, it will be necessary to give some account of the forms in which they attained to their fullest development. For this purpose I shall select the three principal systems, represented by historians as the parents of all the rest, those of *Simon Magus*, *Basilides*, and the *Ophites*; the most satisfactory manner of doing which will be to transcribe the exact words of the well-informed and impartial Hippolytus.

Fig. 3.

SIMONIANISM.

"It is my intention here to exhibit the system of Simon Magus, a native of Gitteh in Samaria, and I will prove that from him all those that come after have derived the elements of their doctrines, and impudently attempted the same things under different appellations. This Simon was skilled in magic and had imposed upon great numbers, partly by practising the art of Thrasymedes after the manner which I have already exposed (in the Book upon 'Magicians'), and partly by miracle-working through the agency of demons. He attempted to set up for a god, being a thorough impostor and altogether unscrupulous and daring; for he was that one whom the Apostles confuted, as is recorded in the Acts.

"Much more wisely therefore and sensibly than Simon did that Apsethus act, when he aimed at being accounted a god, who went to work in Libya; whose story, not being very dissimilar to the scheme of our foolish Simon, it were fitting here to quote, inasmuch as it is quite of a piece with the procedure of the latter.

"Apsethus the Libyan was very desirous of making himself a god, but when, after long labouring, he had failed in his endeavours, he wanted, as the next best thing, to be *supposed* to have made himself a god; and in fact for a considerable time he did enjoy such a reputation. For the simple Libyans used to sacrifice to him as to a Divine Power, in the belief that they were obeying a voice sent forth out of Heaven. He had got together and confined several parrots in one and the same little room, for parrots are plentiful all over Libya, and they distinctly mimic the human voice; and having kept these birds for some time, he taught them to say 'Apsethus is a god.' And when the birds in course of time were taught, and could speak that sentence which he supposed, when spoken, would cause him to pass for a god, then he opened their place of confinement,

and allowed the parrots to escape in different directions. And as the birds flew about, the sound was carried all over Libya, and the words travelled as far as the Greek territory (Cyrene); and thus the Libyans, being struck with amazement at the voice of the birds, and not suspecting the trick played them by Apsethus, accounted him a god. But one of the Greeks having clearly detected the contrivance of the supposed deity, did, by means of the self-same parrots, not merely confute, but also extinguish that vain-glorious and impudent fellow. This Greek caged several of the same parrots, and taught them to utter a contrary strain, 'Apsethus shut us up, and forced us to say *Apsethus is a god.*' But when the Libyans heard this recantation of the parrots, they all came together with one accord, and burnt Apsethus alive.

"In this light we ought to regard the magician Simon, and compare him to this Libyan, a man who made himself a god in that very expeditious manner; for in truth the comparison holds good in all particulars, and the sorcerer met with a fate not unlike that of Apsethus. I will therefore endeavour to *un-teach Simon's parrots* by showing that Simon was not the Christ 'Who hath stood, standeth, and shall stand,' but a man, mortal, generated from the seed of woman, begotten from blood and carnal concupiscence like the rest of mankind: and that such was the fact I shall clearly demonstrate in the course of my narrative. For Simon speaks, when interpreting the Law of Moses, in an impudent and fraudulent fashion, for whenever Moses says 'Our God is a burning and a consuming fire,' Simon, taking what Moses has said in a false sense, maintains that *Fire* is the Principle of all things. He does not perceive the true meaning that God is not 'a fire,' but 'a burning and a consuming fire,' and so not only mutilates the Law of Moses, but plagiarises from Heraclitus, surnamed 'the Obscure.' For Simon designates the Principle of all things 'Boundless Power' in the following words: 'This is the Book of the Declaration of the Voice, and of the Name, from the inspiration of the Great, the Boundless Power. Wherefore the same is sealed, hidden, wrapped up, stored in the dwelling wherein the Root of all things is established.' This *dwelling*

he says, signifies *Man* here below, who is born of blood, and also signifies that there dwells within him that 'Boundless Power' which he asserts is the Root of all things. But this Boundless Power (or *Fire*, according to Simon) is not a simple substance, in the same way as most people who call the Elements 'simple' account Fire likewise as simple: on the contrary, he maintains that the nature of Fire is, as it were, *double*; and of this double number he terms one part the *Insensible*, the other the *Visible;* asserting that the insensible are contained within the visible parts of the Fire, and that the visible parts are generated by the invisible. (This is the same thing that Aristotle expresses by his 'Force' and 'Energy'; and Plato by his 'Intelligible' and 'Sensible.')

"Again the *Visible* part of Fire contains within itself all things whatsoever one can perceive, or even *fail* to perceive, of things visible. The *Invisible*, on the other hand, is whatsoever one can conceive as an object of thought, but which escapes the sense, or even what one *fails* to comprehend by the thought. And to sum up, it may be said that of all things that exist, whether objects of sense or of thought, or, as Simon terms them, Visible and Invisible, the store-house is the Great Fire that is above the heavens: 'As it were a great Tree, like to that seen in his dream by Nabuchadonosor, from the which all flesh was fed.' And the *Visible* he considers to be the *trunk* of the Tree and the branches, and the leaves, and the bark surrounding the same on the outside. All these parts of the great Tree, says he, are kindled from the all-devouring flame of the Fire, and are destroyed. But the *Fruit* of the Tree, if it takes a shape and assumes a proper form, is laid up in a storehouse, and not cast into the fire. For the fruit is made in order that it may be laid up in the storehouse, but the *husk* that it may be committed to the fire; which same is the trunk, ordained not for the sake of the husk but of the fruit.

"And this, according to Simon, is what is written in the Scripture: 'The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the House of Israel, and a man of Judah the well-beloved branch thereof.' Now, if a man of Judah be the 'well-beloved branch,' it is a proof that the *wood* can be nothing else than a *man*. But as

regards the *excretion* and the *dispersion* from the same, the Scripture hath spoken fully and sufficiently for the instruction of all such as be brought to their perfect form: according to the saying, 'All flesh is grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth, but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.' Now this Word of the Lord, says Simon, is the word that is produced in the mouth, that is, Speech; for the place of its birth is nowhere else.

"To be brief therefore: since, according to Simon, the Fire is of the aforesaid nature, and all things that be, both visible and invisible, and vocal and voiceless, and numbered and unnumbered, are this Fire, therefore in his 'Great Revelation' he terms this the Fountain-head of all, the *Great Intellectual*, as constituting each individual of all things in their infinite order, which are capable of being conceived in the mind, and likewise of speaking, of thinking, and of acting. As Empedocles hath it—

"'Through Earth, the Earth perceive, through Water, Water;
Through Air scan Air; through Fire the hidden Fire;
Through Love view Love; through Discord, hateful Discord.'

"For Simon held that all the members of this Fire, both the Visible and the Invisible, possessed *intelligence* and a portion of *mind*. The world that is created, consequently, according to him, comes from the uncreated Fire. The commencement of its creation was in this wise: six 'Radicals' (*lit.* Roots), the First Principles of the beginning of Creation, were taken by the Begotten One out of the Principle of that Fire; for he asserts that these Six Radicals emanated by *pairs* out of the Fire. These Six Radicals he names, 'Mind and Intelligence, Voice and Name, Reason and Thought.' And there exists in these Radicals taken together the whole of the 'Boundless Power,' but existing in *potentiality*, not in *activity*. And this Boundless Power Simon calls 'He who standeth, hath stood, and shall stand;' who, if he shall be *figured* (invested with form) when he is in those Six Powers, shall be in reality, force, power and perfection, the one and the same with the Unbegotten Boundless Power. But if he shall abide in *potentiality*

alone in those Six Powers, and not assume a *form*, he vanishes and perishes, as does a grammatical or a geometrical power in a man's mind. For potentiality, when it has gotten *art*, becomes the light of things generated; but when it has not gotten art (execution) it remains in inertness and darkness, and exactly as when it did not exist at all, and dies with the man upon his death.

"Now of these Six Powers, and of the Seventh which goes along with them, the *First Thought* Simon terms 'Mind and Intellect,' 'Heaven and Earth'; teaching that the one of the male sex looks down upon and takes care of his consort; whilst the Earth below receives from Heaven the 'Intellect,' and fruits of the same nature with the Earth, which are poured down from above. For this cause, says Simon, the Word, often looking down upon the things that spring out of Mind and Intellect, says, 'Hear, O Heavens, and receive with thine ears, O Earth! for the Lord hath spoken: I have begotten and brought up sons, but they have despised me.' He that saith this is the *Seventh Power*, 'He who standeth, hath stood, and shall stand;' for He is the author of those good things which Moses commended, saying that they were very good.

'Voice and name are the Sun and Moon; 'Reason and Thought' are air and water. But with all of these is mingled and combined that Boundless Power, 'He who standeth,' as I have already mentioned.

"Therefore when Moses says, 'In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested from all his works,' Simon, distorting the passage after the aforesaid fashion, makes himself out to be God. When therefore, the Simonians say that there were three days before the Sun and the Moon were made, they understand by it Mind and Intelligence, or Heaven and Earth, and also that 'Boundless Power' of theirs. For these three Powers were made before all the rest. Again, where it is said: 'Before all the world he hath begotten me,' these words, as they pretend, refer to the Seventh Power Now this Seventh Power, who was a Power existing *within* the Boundless Power, and who was made before all the world, *this*, as Simon teaches, is that Seventh Power of whom Moses spake:

'And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,' that is to say, the Spirit containing all things within itself, the Image of the Boundless Power, concerning which Simon saith, 'the *image* is the incorruptible Power governing all things by himself!'

"Now the creation of the world having been after this or a similar fashion, God, says he, made Man out of clay taken from the earth; and he made them not single, but double, both as regards the *image*, and the *likeness*. For the *image* is the Spirit moving upon the face of the waters, who, if he be not clothed with form will perish together with the world, inasmuch as he abode merely in potentiality, and was not made *concrete* by activity. For this is the meaning of the Scripture: 'Lest we be condemned together with the world.' But if it shall take a form, and spring out of an indivisible point, it is what is written in the Revelation: 'The little shall become great.' This 'Great' shall continue to all eternity, and unchangeable, inasmuch as it is no longer *to be* made (*i.e.*, no longer abstract).

"In what way therefore, and after what manner did God form man? In Paradise—for in this point Simon also agreed. But this 'paradise' must be the *womb* (according to him), and that such is the true explanation is proved by the Scripture, which saith, 'I am he that formed thee in thy mother's womb,' for so he will have it to be written. The womb Moses called Paradise by an allegory, if we choose to listen to the word of God; for if God did form man in his mother's womb, that is, in paradise then 'Paradise' must needs signify the womb. 'Eden' is that same region, and the river going forth out of Eden to water the garden, is the *navel*. This navel is divided into four heads; because from each part thereof proceed two arteries running side by side, channels for the breath; and also two veins, channels for the blood. When, therefore, this *navel* proceeding out of the region, Eden, is attached to the fœtus at the lower belly which we commonly term the navel. . . [Here some words are evidently lost]. And the two veins through which the blood flows, and is carried out of the region Eden, through what are called 'the gates of the liver' which nourish

the embryo. Again, the two tubes which we have spoken of as the channels of the blood, embrace the bladder at each side of the pelvis, and touch the great artery which runs along the same, called the *aorta*; and thus the breath, passing through the veins into the heart, produces the motion of the embryo. For so long as the child is being formed in 'paradise,' it neither takes nourishment through the mouth, nor breathes through the nostrils; for, placed as it is in the midst of fluid, it would be instant death for it, were it to breathe, inasmuch as it would draw a fluid and be destroyed. Moreover, the child is conceived within an envelope, which is called the *aminium*; but it receives nourishment through the navel, and takes in the essence of the breath through the dorsal artery above described. The River, therefore, going forth out of Eden, is divided into four heads, namely, Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Touching and Tasting, for these are the only senses that the infant formed in Paradise is possessed of.

"This then, according to Simon, is the law which Moses gave and his Four Books are written in accordance with that law, as their own titles do manifest. For the first book is *Genesis*; the very title, he affirms, were sufficient for the understanding of the whole matter. For this 'Genesis' is the *Sight*, into which one section of the River branches off, because the whole outer world is perceived through the sight. Again, the title of the second book is *Exodus*, which signifies that it was necessary for the thing born to pass through the Red Sea (meaning by 'Red Sea,' the blood), and to enter into the wilderness, and to drink of the bitter water (Marah). Now this 'bitter water' which lies beyond the Red Sea, is the path of *knowledge* during life, which leads through places toilsome and unpleasant. But after it hath been changed by Moses, that is, by the Word, that same bitter water becometh *sweet*. And that such is the reality one may learn from everybody who exclaims in the words of the poet:—

> "'Black is the root, the flower as white as milk,
> Named Moly by the gods, full hard to find
> By mortals: but the gods all things can do.'

"Even what is said by the Gentiles is sufficient for the under-

standing of the whole matter unto him that hath ears to hear. He that tasted of the fruit given by Circe* was not only himself not changed into a beast, but by making use of the virtue of the self-same fruit, remodelled, reformed and recalled those already transformed by her into their own proper shape. For the Faithful Man, and the beloved by that sorceress, is found out by means of that divine and milky potion.

"In the like manner Leviticus is the Third Book (or River); which signifies the sense of *smell*, or the *respiration*; for the whole of that Book is concerning *sacrifices* and *oblations*. But wheresoever there is sacrifice, there also does a sweet smell of perfume arise up from the sacrifice; concerning which sweet odour the sense of smelling is the approver.

"'Numbers,' the Fourth of the Books, signifies the *Taste*, for then the speech is active, inasmuch as it is through the Speech that all objects are designated in *numerical* order.

"'Deuteronomy,' Simon makes out, is so named in reference to the child that has been formed for *Touching*. For as the Touch doth by feeling *reciprocate* and *confirm* the impressions received by the other senses; proving an object to be either hard, or hot, or slippery—in the like manner the Fifth Book of the Law is a *recapitulation* of the four preceding Books.

"All things, therefore (continues he), that are not created exist within us in *potentiality*, not in *activity*; like the science of grammar, or of geometry. In the case, therefore, where they shall have met with the proper training and instruction, there 'shall the Bitter be turned into Sweet'; that is, 'the spears shall be turned into reaping-hooks, and the swords into ploughshares;' they shall be no longer chaff and sticks born for the fire, but the Perfect Fruit, like and equal, as already said, unto the Unbegotten and Boundless Power. But where the Tree shall stand alone, not bearing fruit, there, because it hath not received *form*, it shall be destroyed. 'For now (saith he) the axe is nigh unto the root of the tree. Every tree therefore that beareth not good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.'

* Simon has here forgotten his "Odyssey"; the antidote Moly having been given to Ulysses by Hermes.

"According to Simon, therefore, that blessed and inscrutable thing lies *hidden*, and *within* every man, but in potentiality alone, not in activity; the which is 'He who standeth, hath stood, and shall stand'; who standeth *above* in the Unbegotten Power, who hath stood *below* in the 'River of Waters' when he was begotten in the *image*, and who shall stand *above* by the side of the Blessed and Boundless Power, provided that he shall have received *form*. For there are three that stand, and unless there be the three Æons that stand, 'the Begotten One is not adorned,' meaning Him, who, according to Simon's teaching, moved upon the face of the waters; who hath been re-created after the image, perfect and heavenly; who likewise is in no degree lower than the Unbegotten Power."

"This is a saying amongst the Simonians, 'I and thou are one; thou before me, I after thee.' '*This* is the One Power, divided into Above and Below, begetting itself, nourishing itself, seeking after itself, finding itself, being its own mother, its own father, its own sister, its own consort, its own daughter, son mother, father, inasmuch as it alone is the Root of all things.'

"That *Fire* is the origin of the generation of all things generated, Simon demonstrates after this fashion. 'Of all things whatsoever that exist, being generated, the final cause of the desire for their generation proceeds out of Fire. For "to be set on fire" is the term used to designate the desire of the act of generation and propagation. Now this "Fire," which is *one*, is changed into *two*. For in the male the blood which is hot and red, like Fire in a visible shape, is converted into seed; in the female this same blood is converted into milk. And this change in the male becomes the generation-faculty itself; whilst the change in the female becomes the instrument (efficient cause), of the thing begotten. This (according to Simon) is the "Flaming Sword," which is brandished to keep the way unto the Tree of Life. For the blood is turned into seed and into milk; and this Power becomes both father and mother; the father of those that be born, and the nutriment of those that be nourished; standing in need of none other, sufficient unto itself. Moreover the Tree of Life, which is guarded by the brandished flaming sword is, as we have said, the Seventh Power, the self-begotten,

which comprehends all the others, and which is deposited within the other Six Powers. For if that Flaming Sword should not be brandished, then would that beautiful Tree be destroyed and perish; but when it is changed into the seed and the milk, then He that is stored up within them in potentiality, having obtained the necessary Logos (*Reason*) and the fitting place wherein that Logos may be generated, then, beginning as it were from the smallest spark, he shall wax great to perfection, and increase, and become a Power without end, and without change, being equal and like unto the infinite Æon, being no more begotten again to all eternity.'

"Now, on the strength of this theory, as all are agreed, Simon made himself out a god unto the ignorant, like that Libyan Apsethus above mentioned; 'being begotten and subject to passion so long as he is in potentiality, but not subject to passion after he shall have been begotten, and have received the image, and having been made perfect shall pass out of the dominion of the first two Powers, that is, of Heaven and Earth.' For Simon speaks expressly upon this point in his 'Revelation,' in the following manner. 'Unto you therefore I say what I say, and write what I write. The Writing is this. There are Two stocks of all the Æons put together, having neither beginning nor end, springing out of one Root, the which is *Silence*, invisible, inconceivable, of which Stocks, the one shows itself from above, the which is a great Power, *Mind* of the *all*, pervading all things, and of the *male* sex: the other, showing itself from below, is the Great *Intelligence*, and is of the *female* sex; generating all things. From thence they correspond with each other, and keep up a partnership, and illuminate the Middle Space lying between them (which is the air), inconceivable, having neither beginning nor end. In this Middle Space is the Father, who bears up all things and nourishes the things that have beginning and ending. This is "He who standeth, hath stood, and shall stand; being both male and female, a Power after the image of the pre-existing infinite Power, that hath neither beginning nor ending, existing in *Unity*." For the Intelligence in Unity proceeded out of this last and became Twain. Now He (the Father) is One, for whilst he contained that

Power within himself he was single; nevertheless he was not the *First*, although he was pre-existent, but when he was manifested to himself out of himself, he became *Second*, and neither was he named the "Father," before that Power called him Father. In the like manner therefore as the drawing-forth himself out of himself manifested unto himself his own *Intelligence*, so did this Intelligence also, when manifested, not *create*, but *contemplate* Him; and thereby stood-up the Father within herself, that is to say, the Power. And this Intelligence likewise is both a male and female Power; on which account they answer to one another, for the Power differs not at all from the Intelligence, being one and the same. From that which is above, indeed, is formed the Power; from that which is below, the Intelligence. Of the same kind therefore is the *Unity*, which is manifested out of them both; for being *one* it is found to be *Twain*; both male and female, containing within itself the female. In this manner the *Mind* exists within the Intelligence; which, when severed from each other, although they are One, are found to be Two.'

"Simon, therefore, by publishing these notions, did not merely distort and wrest to his own purpose the sayings of Moses, but equally those of the heathen poets. For he makes an allegory out of the Trojan Horse of wood, and the story of Helen with the torch, and much else, which he applies to his own fables concerning himself and his 'Intelligence.'* Again he makes out the latter to be the Lost Sheep, which, always taking up her abode in the persons of women, doth cause trouble amongst all earthly Powers by reason of her incomparable beauty; wherefore the Trojan War came to pass because of her. For this 'Intelligence'* of his took up her abode in Helen who was born just at that time; and so, when the Powers laid claim to her possession, strife and discord arose amongst all the nations to whom she manifested herself. At any rate, it was on this account that Stesichorus, for having reviled her in his verses, was deprived of sight; but afterwards, when he had repented,

* That is his wife Helena. By a remarkable, though doubtless undesigned coincidence, Fra Dolcino of Novara also went about accompanied by a similar female "Intelligence."

and written his 'Recantation,' in which he sang her praises, he recovered the use of his eyes. Then, after she had been placed in another body by the Angels and the Powers below (who according to Simon were the creators of the world), she was standing upon a housetop* in Tyre, a city of Phœnicia, where he found her on his landing. For he pretends to have gone thither expressly in quest of her, to deliver her out of bondage; and, after having ransomed her, he always carried her about with him, pretending that this was the Lost Sheep, and he himself was the Power that is over all. But the truth is, the impostor had become enamoured of this harlot, whose real name was Helena, so that he bought and kept her; but out of shame as regards his disciples, he invented the aforesaid fable. Furthermore, nowadays those that be the followers of this deceiver and magician, Simon, imitate his example, asserting that it is right to have intercourse with all women promiscuously, for they say 'All land is land, and it matters not where one sows his seed so long as he does sow it.' Nay more, they pride themselves upon this promiscuous intercourse, affirming that *this* is the 'Perfect Love,' and quote the text 'The Holy of holies shall be made holy.' For they hold that they are bound by no obligation as regards anything usually accounted wicked, inasmuch as they have been *redeemed*. In this way, Simon, after he had ransomed Helena, granted salvation unto men by means of his own *Knowledge* (or the *Gnosis*). For inasmuch as the Angels governed the world badly by reason of their own ambitiousness, Simon pretended that he was come to set all things right, having changed his form, and made himself like to the Principalities, the Powers, and the Angels; wherefore it was that he appeared in man's shape, though not a man at all, and had suffered the Passion in Judæa, although he had not suffered it; moreover that he had manifested himself to the Jews as the *Son*, in Samaria as the *Father*, and amongst the Gentiles elsewhere as the *Holy Ghost*, but that he submitted to be called by whatever name men pleased. The Prophets were inspired by the Angels, creators of the world, when they

* A euphemism for "living in a brothel," such being the mode in which these ladies advertised themselves.

delivered their prophecies; on which account those who believe in Simon and Helena pay no regard to them, even in our times; and they do whatever they please, affirming that they are redeemed through *his* grace. For nothing is the cause of damnation, supposing a man to act wickedly, for Evil is evil not through the nature of things but by *convention*. For the Angels who created the world ordained it to be so (as they assert), in order that they might keep in subjection, by means of such fictions, all men who should listen to them. Furthermore they explain the dissolution of the world as referring to the redemption of their own sect.

"The disciples, therefore, of this Simon, practise magic arts and incantation, and make philtres and seductive spells; they likewise send the so-called 'dream-bringing' demons to trouble whomsoever they choose. They likewise practise the rites of the gods named *Paredroi* (the Assessors); they have also an image of Simon in the guise of Jupiter, and likewise one of Helena in the figure of Minerva; and these they worship, calling one the 'Master,' the other the 'Mistress.'"*

So much for the system of the renowned Samaritan, in which, it will have been seen, the place of logical reasoning is supplied by quibbles upon words, taken absolutely without any reference to the context—a style of argument, however, for which it must be confessed that he had highly respectable authority. In strong contrast to this stands the next system, which displays much of the refinement and sound training (amidst its extravagance) of the Grecian mind.

BASILIDES.

Hippolytus, in accordance with his theses that all these "heresies" were mere plagiarisms from the more ancient philosophical systems, declares that Basilides stole the entire of his scheme from Aristotle, and proceeds to establish his charge by the following comparative analysis of the two.

"Aristotle divides all substance into the *Genus*, the *Species*,

* Here follows the account of his career and end, already extracted (pp. 21, 22).

and the *Individual.* The Genus is, as it were, a heap composed of many and different seeds, from which heap all the Species are taken; and the genus is the sufficient cause to all things that exist. For example, 'Animal' is used absolutely, not signifying any particular animal. 'Animal' does not signify a horse, an ox, or a man, but simply 'animal.' From this abstract 'animal' all the species of animals universally derive their origin, and this 'animal' without species is the origin of all animals generated according to their species, and not any one thing of things generated. Thus, *Man* is an animal, deriving his origin from the 'animal,' and *Horse* is an animal in the same manner. Similarly all other animals are derived from that 'animal,' who yet in itself is none of them. If therefore that 'animal' is none of these, then, according to Aristotle, the substance of all things that are proceeds out of things that are non-existent, inasmuch as the 'animal,' out of which they all proceed individually, is not one thing (or 'is nothing at all'). And this, being Nothing, is the origin of all that *be.*

"Now substance being divided into three classes—the genus, the species, and the individual—we have defined the genus as 'animal,' 'man' as the species picked out of the heap of animals, but as yet undiscriminated, and not separated into the form of a particular being. But when I define by a special name, like Socrates, or Diogenes, a man taken from the species the genus, then that being is termed the 'individual.' Thus the genus is divided into species, the species into individual; but the individual once being defined by name cannot be divided any further. This is what Aristotle calls justly and properly 'Substance,' that which cannot be predicated 'of the subject,' nor 'in the subject.' By the term 'of the subject' he means such an idea as 'animal,' which can be predicated of all the subject animals individually—as a horse, an ox, a man—all being called by the same name, 'animal.' Hence, what can be predicated 'of the subject' is that which applies to many and different species indiscriminately. 'In the subject' means that which cannot be predicated without the previous existence of something else wherein it may exist, as 'white,' 'black,'

'just,' 'unjust;' which are the 'accidents' to substance, and therefore called 'qualities,' because expressing *what sort* of thing each thing is. But no one quality can exist in itself; there must be something else for it to exist in. If, therefore, neither the genus 'animal,' which is predicated *of* all animals existing individually, nor 'accident,' which is only to be found in things that exist, can either of them exist by themselves; and if individuals are made up of these two, namely genus and accident, then it follows that *substance*, which is made up of these three, and nothing besides, is made up of things that are *non-existent.*

"If, therefore, what is properly and primarily termed 'substance' (the *Individual*) is made up of these, it is, according to Aristotle, made up of things non-existent.

"Besides the terms Genus, Species, Individual, Substance is further designated as 'Matter' and 'Formation.' Upon this definition rests the Basilidan theory of the Universe. The Universe Basilides divides into several parts: That part which extends from the earth up to the moon is destitute of *foresight* and of *conduct*, and is content with its own nature. The part beyond the moon is constituted with foresight, reason, and conduct, up to the surface of heaven. This 'surface' is a *fifth* substance, free from all the elements out of which the world was created; this, therefore, is the 'fifth and supra-mundane substance.' These three divisions Aristotle has treated of in three separate works: his 'Physics,' 'Metaphysics,' and 'On the Fifth Substance.' Not merely his ideas, but his words and terminology have been borrowed by Basilides, and applied to the Scriptures. How, then, can his disciples, being in reality *heathens*, expect to be benefited by Christ?

"Basilides and his true son and disciple Isidorus, assert that Matthew (the Evangelist) revealed to them certain secret doctrines which had been specially communicated to himself by Christ. 'There was a time when there was Nothing; nay, not even that "Nothing" was anything of *being*, but barely and without reserve, and without any sophism, there was altogether *Nothing*. When I use the term "was," I do not mean to imply that this Nothing *was*, but in order to explain what I wish to set forth, I employ the expression "there *was* absolutely

Nothing." Now that which is called "Ineffable" is not absolutely ineffable, for we ourselves give it that name of ineffable; whereas that which is *not even* ineffable is not "ineffable," but infinitely above every name that can be named. Even for the Visible world, so multifarious are its divisions that we have not names enough; but we are reduced to conceive many of its properties from the names of the properties already named, these (other) properties being ineffable. For an identity of names occasions a disorder and confusion of ideas in the mind of the learner.' (This is a direct plagiarism from Aristotle's discussion of synonyms in his book 'On the Categories.')

"When therefore Nothing *was*—no substance, no non-substance, no simple, no compound, no incomprehensible, no sensible, no man, no angel, no God—when there was nothing whatever of what is called by name, perceived by sense, conceived by the mind, but all, and even in a more refined sense than this, being put out of the question—then this No-being God (Aristotle's 'thought of a thought,' which Basilides alters into his 'No-being'), without thought, without purpose, without counsel, without passion, without desire, willed to make the world. I use the word 'willed' merely to express my meaning, it being without thought, without sensation, without will, that this was done; and by 'world' I do not mean that world created afterwards and divided by latitude and longitude, but I understand by it 'the Seed of the World.' This 'Seed of the World' contained the *All* within itself, just as the germ of the mustard-seed contains the root, the stalk, the leaves, the grain, the last containing again the rudiments of others innumerable. Thus the No-being God created the No-being world out of No-being things, when he deposited the seed containing within itself the complete seeds of the universe. And to give an illustration of my meaning: the egg of any bird of diversified plumage—the peacock, for example—although itself single, yet includes within itself the many-coloured, multifarious forms of multifarious substances; so, in like manner, did this seed of the world deposited by the No-being God include within itself the multiform, multifarious seeds of the universe.

"This seed, then, contained all things that can be named; nay more, all things that can not be named, as yet hidden in futurity, and to come forth after their kind by accretion, and by growth, after the manner in which we see the new-born infant acquire his teeth, his flesh, his father's form, and all his understanding, and all such things that come to the child as it grows up, not apparent in him at the beginning. Now, inasmuch as it is impossible to use the term 'projection' of the No-being God (in fact, Basilides is opposed to all schemes of creation by means of a 'projection'), for we must not suppose *Matter* necessary to his operations in the same way as her threads are to the spider, or as timber and metal to man when he sets about any work; but 'He spake and it was made'; and this is what Moses means by his 'Let there be light, and there was light.' Whence, then, was this light? Moses saith not *whence* it was, but that it was from the word of the speaker; but neither He that spoke *was*, neither *was* that which was made. The seed of the world was this word that was spoken, 'Let there be light.' And to this the evangelist refers by his 'And that was the true Light which enlighteneth every man coming into the world.' For man draws his beginning out of that seed, and is illuminated thereby." (This "seed," therefore, divided into infinite other seeds, is nothing else than Aristotle's "genus," which is divided into infinite other "species," as "animal," the genus, itself non-existent, is divided into "species," as ox, horse, man, &c.)

"Having, therefore, got this seed for his starting-point, Basilides goes on thus: 'Whatever I speak of as made after this, there is no need of inquiring *out of what* it was made, seeing that this seed comprehended within itself the principles of the All. Now let us examine what came out of this seed in the first, second, and third place. There was in the seed a *Sonship*, triple, of the same substance with the No-being God, and generated by him. In this triple Sonship one part was subtile, another gross, the third needing purification.* Upon the first *projecting* (emitting) of the seed, the subtile element disengaged itself, ascending aloft "like a feather or a thought,"

* Corresponding to "Immaterial, Material, and Mixed."

and arrived at the No-being One. For Him all Nature desireth, by reason of the super-eminence of his beauty and perfection. The gross part endeavoured to imitate its example, but was weighed down by its coarser nature, and detained within the seed. To assist it, therefore, the Sonship equips it with a *wing*, such as Plato in his "Phaedrus" wings the soul withal. Now this wing is the Holy Ghost, which the grosser part putting on, is both advantaged itself, and advantages the other. For the wings of a bird are not able to fly if severed from the bird, neither can the soul fly if separated from her wings. Such, then, is the relationship borne by the Sonship to the Holy Ghost, and also by the Holy Ghost to the Sonship. Soaring aloft, therefore, upon its wings—that is, upon the Holy Ghost, this Soul Part carried its wings, the Holy Ghost, along with it up to the No-being God, and the Sensible Sonship, but was unable to comprehend the latter, because its own nature is not constituted of the same substance with Him. But in the same way as dry and pure air is repugnant to the nature of fishes, so the place, more ineffable than the Ineffable One, and more lofty than all names that can be named, the seat of the No-being God and of the Subtile Part, was contrary to the nature of the Holy Ghost. On this account, the Sonship left it *near* to that place which cannot be conceived by mind, nor described by words, though not altogether abandoned by himself, but retaining something of his power (or essence), just as a vessel once filled with a precious perfume ever retains traces of that perfume, however carefully it may have been emptied. And this is manifestly like the ointment upon the head "which ran down to Aaron's beard"—that is, the perfume of the Sonship, brought down by the Holy Ghost even into the impurity and degradation of mortality, out of which itself at the beginning had soared aloft, raised by the Sonship, as it were, on eagle's wings, being itself fastened upon his back. For all things struggle upwards from that which is below towards that which is above, from the "worse towards the better," whereas nothing of those above in the better place seeks to descend below.'

"The third part of the Sonship—namely, that requiring

purification, remained included within the infinite *head* (or sum) of infinite seeds, both giving and receiving benefit, in the manner hereafter to be explained. After the first and second ascensions of the Sonship, the Holy Ghost, which had been left above, became the 'firmament' between the world and the upper world. For Basilides divides all things that are into two great classes, the 'world' and the 'upper world'; the Spirit, therefore, occupying the interval between the two (namely, the Holy Ghost, which retains the odour of the Sonship) he terms the 'Boundary Spirit.' Now after this firmament above the world had been constituted, there broke forth out of the Seed of the World the 'Great Archon,' the Head of the World, or beauty, strength, magnitude indissoluble. More ineffable is he than the Ineffable, more powerful than the Powerful, wiser than the Wise, more beautiful than any beauty that can be named. As soon as he was born he soared upwards and reached the firmament, but *that* was the limit of his flight; for he knew not of the existence of anything *beyond* the firmament, and therefore he remained more beautiful, more powerful, more wise than any of the things subjacent, always excepting the Sonship—that is, the Third impurified Person—who still lay enclosed within the immense universal seed. Imagining himself, therefore, to be Lord and Ruler and *Intelligent Architect*, he set about the creation of the world. In the first place, not wishing to abide alone, he generated unto himself a son out of things subjacent (*mundane elements*), far wiser and more beautiful than himself, for *this* son was in truth the Third Person yet left enclosed within the seed. This thing had been predestinated by the No-being God from the beginning; as soon as he beheld this son he was enamoured of his perfect beauty, and bade him to sit down on his right hand. This they call the 'Ogdoad,' the abode of the Great Archon. The great and wise Demiurgus then made the entire *ætherial* creation, being inspired and empowered thereto by his own son, so far above himself in wisdom." (This idea is copied from Aristotle's "Entelechia" of the natural organic body; the *active soul* in the body being itself wiser, stronger, and better than the body. The theory, therefore, propounded originally by Aristotle con-

cerning the body and the soul, Basilides thus applies to the Great Archon and the Son whom he had created; for as the Archon creates the Son, so does Aristotle make the soul to be the work and effect of the natural organic body.) "All things, therefore, are ruled by the providence of the Great Archon" (or rather, by the "Entelechia" of himself and son)—"all things, that is to say, which lie *below* the moon, and *within* the æther—for the moon is the division between the æther and the air.

"The creation being finished, there arose out of the seed a 'Second Archon,' but greatly inferior to the first, yet similarly *ineffable.* This (Archon) is designated the 'Hebdomad.' He proceeded to create all things *below* the æther of which he is the Demiurgus; and he, in his turn, generated a son infinitely superior to himself. The intermediate space between the regions Ogdoad and Hebdomad is occupied by the universal seed, the heap of species, the particles whereof are guided by the intelligence implanted in them by the First Creator as to the *times*, the *natures*, and the *changes* in which they have to come forth, and possess no other guide, guardian, or creator.

"The whole creation was in this way completed, of the world and of the things above the world; but there was yet left within the seed the 'Third Sonship,' who, in his turn, had to be developed, revealed, and to ascend beyond the Boundary Spirit up to the Subtile Sonship and the No-being One. *This* is the interpretation (meaning) of the Scripture: 'The whole creation groaneth and is in labour, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.' These 'sons' are the *Spiritual Men* left here below to guide and to perfect the souls that from their nature belong to this place. 'From Adam unto Moses sin reigned' —that is to say, the Great Archon, who had dominion up to the firmament, and imagined that he alone was God, and that there was none other above him—for all above him was kept in the deepest silence. *This* is the 'mystery not revealed unto the Fathers'; the Great Archon, the Ogdoad, was, as he supposed, the Lord and Ruler of the universe. But of the 'interval,' or middle space, the Hebdomad was the ruler; now the Ogdoad is ineffable, but the Hebomad may be uttered by speech. This ruler of the Hebdomad was He who spake unto Moses, saying,

'I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Name of God I have not revealed unto them'—that is, He did not reveal to them the ineffable ruler of the Ogdoad. All the prophets who were before the Saviour's coming spoke through the inspiration of the Second Archon.

"When the time was come for the manifestation of the Sons of God, the Gospel came, penetrating through every power, dominion, and name that can be named, although the Sonship did not come down from his place upon the right hand of the Incomprehensible No-being One. But, like as Indian naphtha kindles at the mere sight of fire a long way off, so do powers fly up out of the seed to the Sonship that is beyond the firmament. The son of the Great Archon of the Ogdoad thus receives, like as naphtha catches the distant flame, the emanations of the Sonship who is beyond the firmament; and this last, the Boundary Spirit, serves for the communication of the thoughts from the one to the other.

"The Gospel thus came to the Great Archon through his own son, and he was converted, and troubled, and became wise, learning his own *ignorance* (or want of knowledge); and this is the interpretation of 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of *wisdom*.' For the Christ, sitting by him, instructed him concerning the Ineffable No-being One, concerning the Son who is beyond the firmament, and concerning the creation of the universe. The Great Archon being thus instructed, was filled with *fear*, and confessed the *sin* he had committed in magnifying himself; and this is the meaning of 'I acknowledge my transgression and I confess my sin.' When, therefore, the Great Archon was enlightened, every creature of the Ogdoad was likewise enlightened, and then came the time for the enlightenment and evangelising of the ruler of the Hebdomad. For this end the son of the Great Archon communicated to the son of the Second Archon the light which he himself had received from above, and *he* communicated his instruction to his Father, who in like manner was convinced of, and confessed *his* sin. By this time every creature of the Hebdomad was enlightened, and had the Gospel preached unto them. For in this division (the region below the æther) also, there is an infinite creation

of powers, principalities, and dominions (concerning whom Basilides has a lengthy dissertation; who moreover in this region places the 365 heavens, and their ruler ABRASAX, so called because his name contains that sum, for which reason the year consists also of that number of days).

"After all this it was necessary that the *Unformedness* (ἀμορφία) existing in our region—that is, the Sonship still lying enclosed in the mass like an abortion—should be enlightened in the same manner with those aforementioned. The Light therefore passed through the Hebdomad upon the son of the Hebdomad—that is, upon *Jesus*, the son of Mary. This is 'the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee,' namely, the power of *unction*, descending from the Supreme through the Demiurgus upon the Son.

"The present constitution of things will last until every particle of the Sonship enveloped in the unformed mass shall be attracted into Jesus, shall be disentangled and sublimated by him, and rendered capable of ascending by itself to the first source of Light, to which it bears a natural affinity.

"In this way the Three Persons of the Sonship being all united once more above the firmament, then mercy shall be shown unto the creation, 'which languishes and groans waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God'; for all men belonging to the Sonship shall ascend up unto Him. When this is accomplished, He will bring upon the world a *deep ignorance*, so that all things here below shall abide in their nature, and desire nothing contrary to their nature. By this means the souls appointed to abide here below will be destitute of even the slightest notion of anything existing above them, lest they should be tormented by the fruitless desire of ascending up into the same; like as though a *fish* should desire to pasture with the flocks upon the hills, a wish which, if gratified, would be its destruction. For all things are *eternal* so long as they continue in their natural place, but become *mortal* when they endeavour to escape beyond it. The same *ignorance* will envelop the ruler of the Hebdomad, in order that sorrow and grief and confusion may flee away from him; that he may no longer be troubled with the desire of things above him and contrary to

his nature. This ignorance shall also come over the Great Archon of the Ogdoad, and over all creatures subject unto him, and for the same reason. This is the 'restoration of all things; enclosed from the beginning within the seed, and disposed according to its season. This is the Saviour's meaning in 'My hour is not yet come'; it is also signified by the Magi beholding the star, inasmuch as His coming, proclaimed from the beginning, was subject to the disposition of the stars.*

"The Gospel is the *Declaration* of supramundane things, which the Great Archon knew not of. But when it was told him of the Sonship, of the Boundary Spirit, and of the No-being God, he rejoiced with an exceeding great joy. With respect to the birth of Jesus, all things came to pass as they are written in the Gospels. For *He* was the firstfruits of the division of the classes, previously all commingled here below. Now, as the world is distributed into the Ogdoad, the head of the universe, whose chief is the Great Archon, and into the Hebdomad, whose chief is the Demiurgus, chief also of our degree where Frailty (liability to error) subsists, it was necessary that this Confusion should be distributed and set in order by Jesus. That part of him, therefore, which was of the 'Unformedness,' namely, his body suffered what it did suffer and returned again into unformedness; that part which belonged to the Hebdomad, namely, his soul, returned again into the Hebdomad after his resurrection; the part belonging to the Ogdoad remained with the Great Archon, and the part belonging to the Boundary Spirit was left there in his ascension. But the third Sonship, thus purified in his passage upwards, was reunited to the Blessed Sonship who is supreme above. (In short, the whole theory of the religion consists in the *Confusion* of the Seed-heap, its *Redistribution* into classes, and the *Restoration* of all things to their natural places. This division of the classes was made in the first instance by Jesus, and the sole object of his passion was the restoration of the classes, which were mixed up together, into their proper order. And for this reason Jesus himself was

* This may allude to the Rabbinical explanation of the "sign of the coming" of the Messiah as being the conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in Pisces.

distributed as we have shown, amongst the several classes. These then are the things that Basilides fables, who taught in Egypt, and, having learned his wisdom *from the Egyptians* brought forth such fruits as these.)"

This concluding remark of Hippolytus deserves particular notice; it shows that he regarded the Basilidan theory as the mere *adaptation* to present requirements of an ancient esoteric doctrine belonging to the Egyptian priesthood. That it was nothing more than a plagiarism from the Aristotelian philosophy, as the learned Father labours to demonstrate with so much ingenuity, appears to me by no means made out. But the Basilidan theory has one striking feature that distinguishes it from every other form of the Gnosis, in its entirely ignoring the existence of an *Evil Principle*, or of malignity and rebellion against the Supreme God. His two rulers of the upper and lower worlds, the Great Archon of the Ogdoad, and the Demiurgus of the Hebdomad, so far from opposing the Gospel receive it with joy, and humbly acknowledge their inferiority to the sender. The Passion of Jesus is not due to the malice of either of them, but is voluntary, and undertaken as the sole means of restoring confused elements of the All to the *harmony* indispensable for their *eternal* duration. Even the final withdrawing of the Divine Light from the Ogdoad and Hebdomad is done for the same beneficent purpose, in order that both they and their greatness may rest for ever in blissful ignorance, each holding himself supreme in his own creation, and knowing of nothing above it, may no longer be tormented by vain aspirations after a state of perfection for which his nature is not adapted. The benevolent spirit that pervades the whole theory strongly supports the assertion of Hippolytus, and points out for its source the Egyptian mythology, to which the notion of two principles, equal in power but antagonistic in nature, would have been unutterably shocking.

THE OPHITES.

The Ophites should hold by right the first place amongst the schools we are considering, for that impartial and acute historian of the Gnosis, Hippolytus, styles them, "The Naaseni who specially call themselves 'Gnostics.' But inasmuch as this deception of theirs is multiform and has many heads (a play upon their name of serpent-followers), like the Hydra of fable, if I smite all the heads at once with the wand of Truth, I shall destroy the whole serpent, for all the other sects differ but little from this one in essentials." He therefore commences his history of the Gnostic heresies, properly so called, with a minute account of this one, illustrated with copious extracts from their text-books; on account of their antiquity and importance bestowing much more of his space upon them than upon any other of their offshoots or competitors.

Their strange-sounding title "Naaseni"—"Followers of the Naas" (the only way in which the Greek, from its want of aspirate letters, could write the Hebrew Nachash, "Serpent")—was literally rendered by "Ophites," the name which has ever since served to designate them. They first assumed a definite existence about the same time as the Basilidans, in the middle of the second century, although the elements of the doctrine are derived from a source much more remote. That source was the secret doctrines taught in the various Pagan Mysteries; and likewise certain philosophic theories of the Greeks, although certainly not to the same extent as the learned Hippolytus labours so ingeniously to demonstrate.

In support of this statement I shall proceed to quote from the same Father some curious examples of the method in which the Naaseni pretended to recognise their own "knowledge" in the esoteric religions of antiquity. After quoting a long passage from Pindar about the conflicting theories as to the creation of the First Man* and the names given to him by different nations, the Ophite text-book continues:

* "But the Libyans held that *Iarbas* was the first-born of men; he who, rising up out of their droughty plains, first gathered the sweet dates of Jove. And even in our day, the Nile fattening the mud of Egypt,

"This was the Man brought forth by the Earth spontaneously; but he lay without breath, without motion, without stirring, like a statue; being made after the image of their Adamas above, the subject of their hymns, through the agency of several Powers, concerning each one of whom they narrate a long fable. But in order that the Man above might be obtained, 'from whom is every tribe upon the Earth, and likewise in the Heavens,' there was given unto him a *soul*, that through this soul the image of the Man above might suffer and be chastened in bondage. As to the nature and source of this soul sent down to animate this image, the Ophite theory is derived *not from Scripture, but from the doctrine of the Mysteries.* 'The Gospel according to the Egyptians' is their text-book on this point. They premise that the nature of the soul is extremely difficult to investigate by reason of its inherent changeableness, never abiding fixedly in the same place, habits, or passion: and they adopt in this particular the *notions of the Assyrian mystics.* It is a question with them whether the soul comes from the 'Pre-existing,' or from the 'Self-begotten One,' or from the 'Effusion of Chaos.' They adopt the *Assyrian* division of the soul as being both one and threefold! For all Nature longs for a soul; the soul is the efficient cause of all things that grow, are nourished and have action. For without a soul, growth and nutrition are impossible; even stones have a soul, for they possess the faculty of growth, and this faculty cannot exist without nutrition. All things therefore in Heaven or Earth, and in the Abyss, are eager after a soul. This *soul* the Assyrians call 'Adonis,' 'Endymion,' 'Attis'; and hence arose the fable of the love of Venus for Adonis; *Venus* signifying *generation.* The love of Proserpine for Adonis means that the soul is mortal if separated from Venus; that is, from generation. When the Moon is enamoured of Endymion, it is Nature herself desiring a more sublime soul. When the Mother of the gods emasculates her lover, Attis, it signifies the Power

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and giving life to things clothed with flesh, through his moist heat breeds living creatures. The Assyrians pretend that the First Man arose in their country, *Oannes*, the eater of fish; but the Chaldeans say he was *Adam*."

above recalling into itself the male energy of the soul. For the Man that is above is of both sexes." [On this account they most vehemently denounce all intercourse with women.] "Attis was deprived of his virility, that is, was divested of his lower, earthly, part, and then translated to the Upper World, 'where is neither male nor female, but a new creature,' the Man above, of two sexes. And to this truth not only Rhea, but all creation, beareth testimony. And to this doth Paul refer in Romans (i. 20–27): (where they strangely pervert his expression ἀσχημοσύνη, as signifying that heavenly, sublime, felicity, that *absence of all form* which is the real source of every form). These same verses of Paul, according to them, contain the key to their whole system, and to their 'Mystery of Celestial Pleasure.' For the promise of 'Washing' applies to none save the man who is introduced into the eternal pleasure, 'being washed with the True Water, and anointed with the Unction that cannot be spoken.' The Phrygian Mysteries, equally with the Assyrian, teach the same great truth, when they teach the blessed nature of things past, present, and to come, hidden and yet manifested; the 'true kingdom that is within you.' To the same effect they bring forward the *Gospel of Thomas*, which has, 'He that seeketh shall find me amongst children from seven years downwards, for in the fourteenth generation, being hidden, I will manifest myself.' [Although in reality this is not a maxim of Christ's, but a maxim of Hippocrates. 'The boy at seven years of age is the half of his father,'—in stature.]

"The Egyptians were, after the Phrygians, the most ancient of mankind, and the first establishers of mysteries. The Ophites explain as follows the esoteric doctrine concerning Isis, and the genital member of Osiris, lost, sought after, and enveloped by her seven times in a black (or dark blue)* vestment. Osiris is the element *Water;* Nature seven times enveloped in an etherial robe, that is, the seven planetary spheres, stands for Generation and Change, or Creation transformed by the ineffable, formless, imageless, incomprehensible Deity. The same is implied in the words of Scripture, 'The righteous man shall fall *seven* times, and shall rise again'—his

* Μέλας has both these meanings.

all signifying the revolutions of the planets put in motion by the All-mover.

"They likewise discourse concerning the essence (or *existence*) of the 'Seed,'* the final cause of all things that exist, although itself none of them, and yet making and generating all things; or, as they themselves express it, 'I become what I will, and am what I am; therefore I say that moving all, I am myself immovable.' For it continues what it is, making all things, although itself is made nothing of all that exist. To this doctrine the Saviour's words refer, 'Why callest thou me good? One only is good, my Father which is in Heaven, who maketh the sun to shine upon the just and upon the unjust, and sendeth His rain upon the sinners and upon the righteous.' And this is the *great and unknown Mystery*, hidden amongst the Egyptians and yet manifested, for Osiris standeth in his temple before Isis, having his secret part exposed and pointed upwards, and crowned with all the fruits of the creation. And for this cause, the same member [the Phallus] holds the first position in the most sacred places, being shown forth unto the world, 'like a light set upon a candlestick': it is set up on the house-tops, and in the streets, and for landmarks. It is a blessing acknowledged and proclaimed by all, for they call it the 'Bringer of Luck' (ἀγαθηφόρον),—not understanding what they say. This mystery the Greeks *got from Egypt*, and observe unto this day. For by this symbol they represent Hermes; and they entitle that god 'Logicos,' for he is the *interpreter* and Creator of things made, in making, and to be made; and he is represented by this his proper symbol. And that *this* is the Hermes, guide, companion, and author of souls, Homer hath perceived, for he saith (Od. xxiv. 1–2):—

'Cyllenian Hermes summoned forth the souls of the bold suitors,'

not meaning those of Penelope's suitors, but of us the awakened and admonished.

'From what vast happiness, what height of glory,'

we have fallen, namely, from the Primal Man, the *Adamas*

* The "Seed of the World" in the Basilidan system, as already explained (p. 73).

that is above, into this vessel of clay, and become the servants of the Demiurgus, of Ildabaoth, the God of Fire, the *Fourth* in number (for by this name they call the creator of the 'World of Species,' κοσμὸς ἰδικός).

"In his hand his wand Beauteous, all golden, by whose potency the eyes of mortals he at pleasure lulls to sleep, or rouses others from their slumber. For He is the sole author of life and death, therefore is it written, 'Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron.' But Homer wishing to embellish the incomprehensible reality of the nature of the Logos, has given to him a rod of *gold*, not of iron. Some He casts into slumber, others he awakens, and makes them aware of their condition: 'Awake thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' For *this* is the Christ that is figured within all the sons of men by the unfigured Logos. *This* is the great and profound mystery of the Eleusinian rites, the cry, YE KYE, *Rain! Conceive!* All things are subject unto Him, for 'their sound is gone forth unto all lands.' And again, *this* is the hidden sense of Homer's

> 'He waved his wand, they followed with shrill cry.'

That is, the souls in a continuous line, as the poet goes on to express by the simile—

> 'As in the furthest depths of some vast cave,
> Shrill cry the bats when one drops from their chain,
> Down from the rock where fast they cling together.'

That is, the souls fallen down from the Rock above, namely from the Adamas. *This* is the Adamas, the chief corner-stone, 'which is made the head of the corner,' because in the head is placed the formative substance, the brain, out of which all generation proceeds. 'I will set the Adamant in the foundations of Zion' is allegorical for setting the figure of the Man (in the soul). And the text, 'This Adamas is firmly held by teeth in the wall,' is the *Inner Man* that is signified, the 'stone cut without hands,' which hath fallen down from the Adamas above into this earthly potter's vessel, this figure of *forgetfulness.**

* Meaning the *Body*, in which the Inner Man imprisoned has lost all recollection of his primal source.

"The souls follow Hermes, or the Logos.

> 'So moved they, crying, through the darksome paths;
> Hermes their guide, that god devoid of ill.'

That is, he leads them to the everlasting places where no ill comes; for whither were they going?

> 'They passed o'er Ocean's wave and Leucas' rock,
> The Sun's bright portals, and the land of dreams.'

"This 'Ocean' signifies the generation of gods and the generation of men, ever tossing in a perpetual flow and ebb. When it runs *downwards* it is the generation of men; when it tosses itself *upwards* against its boundary,* the rock Leucas, it is the generation of gods. 'For this cause,' saith the Wise One, 'I have said ye are gods and the children of the Most Highest, when ye shall make haste to flee out of Egypt, and shall come beyond the Red Sea into the Wilderness'; that is, out of this earthly mixture (or confusion) up to the Jerusalem above, which is the mother of the living. 'But if ye return into Egypt (or, into this earthly nature) ye shall die.' 'Egypt' being the prison of the body. *This* is the mighty Jordan which, flowing downwards, hindered the flight of the Children of Israel; but which Jesus (*i.e.* Joshua) turned, and made to flow upwards."

"Following guides like those just cited, these very strange fellows the Gnostics (observes Hippolytus), the inventors of a new art of grammar (or, criticism), extol beyond all expression their prophet Homer, who hath foreshown these doctrines unto them: and, by seducing those ignorant of the Holy Scriptures into such-like fancies, they make fools of them in the manner described."

"Another of their maxims is that 'Whoso saith that the All cometh from *One* is grossly deceived; but he that saith that the All cometh from *Three*, hath the true key to the system of the universe. For there is one nature of the Man that is above, Adamas; one mortal here below; one without a king, the generation existing up above, where is Mariam the Sought-After, and Jothor the great and wise, and Sephora, she that

* The Basilidan "Boundary Spirit," or Holy Ghost (p. 76).

that is above, into this vessel of clay, and become the servants of the Demiurgus, of Ildabaoth, the God of Fire, the *Fourth* in number (for by this name they call the creator of the 'World of Species,' κοσμὸς ἰδικός).

"In his hand his wand Beauteous, all golden, by whose potency the eyes of mortals he at pleasure lulls to sleep, or rouses others from their slumber. For He is the sole author of p[illegible] and death, therefore is it written, 'Thou shalt rule them hear, a[illegible] iron.' But Homer wishing to embellish the in- were not utte[illegible] reality of the nature of the Logos, has given to sublime names [illegible] not of iron. Some He casts into slumber, *lacav* is the name o[illegible] makes them aware of their condition: who is below, mortal; *Zeesa*[illegible] rise from the dead, and Christ *This* is He that pervades all [illegible] the Christ that is figured female, named by the Greeks Geryon, [illegible] *This* is and flowing out of the Earth: whom the Greeks also ca[illegible] Moon's celestial horn," because he has *mixed* and *tempered* all things [a play upon the similar sounding words κέρας and κρᾶσις]. "For all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made, and what was made in him is Life." This Life is the life unspeakable, the generation of the Perfect Man, unknown to former ages. The "Nothing" that was made without him is the World of Species, for *that* world was made without him by the *Third* and by the *Fourth* One.* *This* is the Cup (*condy*) of Joseph, "out of which the king doth drink and use divination." Of this also do the Greeks (Anacreon) sing in Bacchic frenzy,

> "Bring me, boy, the draught divine;
> Bring me water, bring me wine;
> Make me drunk with quaffing deep,
> Lull my charmed soul to sleep;
> For my cup predicts to me
> Of what country I shall be."

Here Anacreon's dumb cup utters the unspeakable mystery, for it tells him to *what country* he shall belong, that is, whether to the *Spiritual* or to the *Carnal* world. *This* also is the "Water changed into wine," at the famous wedding at Cana, when Jesus manifested the kingdom of Heaven—that kingdom which is

* Ildabaoth, the God of Fire.

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"This 'Ocean' signifies the generation of gods and, and made ation of men, ever tossing in a perpetual flow an nal it runs *downwards* it is the generation of men, 'Unless ye eat itself *upwards* against its boundary,* the enter into the Kingdom generation of gods. 'For this shall drink of the cup that I have said ye are gods and shall not be able to enter.' For He when ye shall *nature* of His disciples, and that every one must abide by his own nature. For out of the Twelve Tribes he chose the Twelve Disciples; for which cause not all who heard their teaching received or understood the same; for that which is not according to Nature is contrary to Nature. Him (Adamas) do the Phrygians name 'Corybas,' for he descends from the Head (*cory*) who is above, the Supernal Brain; and permeates the All in a manner incomprehensible. And, as the Prophet hath it, 'Ye have heard his voice, but ye have not beheld his form'; that is, the *Image* coming down from the Formless One above no one knows, for it is hidden within an earthen vessel. *This* is as the Psalmist hath it: 'The God dwelling in the great

* A valuable notice of the type under which the Cabiri were represented in this the most venerated of all the Grecian sanctuaries. It is curiously illustrated by Ficoroni's bronze group, figured in his "Memorie di Labico," and given to the Kircherian Museum. A female, half-draped in a star-spangled robe, rests her hands on the shoulders of twin youths, similarly *arrecti*, with the ears and standing-up hair of fauns, one holds a horn, the other the handle of a vase. The base is inscribed in very archaic letters—

DINDIA MAGOLNIA FIEA DEDIT NOVIOS PLAVTIOS MED ROMAI FECID

where it will be seen that Dindia uses the *metronymic* after the Etruscan fashion. This group, six inches high, served for handle to the lid of a cylindrical pyxis, two palms deep, resting on three lion's claws. With it was found a mirror, the back engraved with the combat of Pollux and Amycus, LOSNA with her crescent standing in the middle, the names in regular Etruscan.

seeth, and Moses, whose offspring is not in Egypt, for his sons were born unto him in the land of Midian. Neither hath this truth escaped Homer, for he sings—

> "All things are parcelled into portions three,
> And to each portion its due honour falls."

For it is necessary that the *Great Ones* (τὰ μεγέθη) should be expressed in words, but in such wise that "hearing men may not hear, and seeing they may not perceive." For if the Great Ones were not uttered, the world could not exist. These three most sublime names are, KAVLACAV, SAVLASAV, ZEESAR. *Kavlacav* is the name of the Adamas who is above; *Savlasav* of him who is below, mortal; *Zeesar* of the Jordan that floweth upwards. *This* is He that pervades all things, being at once male and female, named by the Greeks Geryon, as having three bodies and flowing out of the Earth: whom the Greeks also call "The Moon's celestial horn," because he has *mixed* and *tempered* all things [a play upon the similar sounding words κέρας and κρᾶσις]. "For all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made, and what was made in him is Life." This Life is the life unspeakable, the generation of the Perfect Man, unknown to former ages. The "Nothing" that was made without him is the World of Species, for *that* world was made without him by the *Third* and by the *Fourth* One.* *This* is the Cup (*condy*) of Joseph, "out of which the king doth drink and use divination." Of this also do the Greeks (Anacreon) sing in Bacchic frenzy,

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* Ildabaoth, the God of Fire.

hidden within every man, like the leaven sufficient for the *three* measures. Here likewise is the unspeakable secret of the *Samothracian Mysteries*, which none but we the "Perfect" are able to understand, for the Samothracians expressly mention the Adamas who is above—the Primal Man. For in the Temple of the Samothracians stand two naked men, having their hands and their genital members elevated towards heaven,* like the Hermes of Cyllene. These two statues represent the Primal Man, and the Spiritual Man after he is "born again, and made like unto Him every whit."'

"*This* is the true sense of the Saviour's words, 'Unless ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven'; and 'Though ye shall drink of the cup that I drink of, whither I go ye shall not be able to enter.' For He knew the *nature* of His disciples, and that every one must abide in his own nature. For out of the Twelve Tribes he chose the Twelve Disciples; for which cause not all who heard their teaching received or understood the same; for that which is not according to Nature is contrary to Nature. Him (Adamas) do the Phrygians name 'Corybas,' for he descends from the Head (*cory*) who is above, the Supernal Brain; and permeates the All in a manner incomprehensible. And, as the Prophet hath it, 'Ye have heard his voice, but ye have not beheld his form'; that is, the *Image* coming down from the Formless One above no one knows, for it is hidden within an earthen vessel. *This* is as the Psalmist hath it: 'The God dwelling in the great

* A valuable notice of the type under which the Cabiri were represented in this the most venerated of all the Grecian sanctuaries. It is curiously illustrated by Ficoroni's bronze group, figured in his "Memorie di Labico," and given to the Kircherian Museum. A female, half-draped in a star-spangled robe, rests her hands on the shoulders of twin youths, similarly *arrecti*, with the ears and standing-up hair of fauns, one holds a horn, the other the handle of a vase. The base is inscribed in very archaic letters—

DINDIA MAGOLNIA FIEA DEDIT NOVIOS PLAVTIOS MED ROMAI FECID

where it will be seen that Dindia uses the *metronymic* after the Etruscan fashion. This group, six inches high, served for handle to the lid of a cylindrical pyxis, two palms deep, resting on three lion's claws. With it was found a mirror, the back engraved with the combat of Pollux and Amycus, LOSNA with her crescent standing in the middle, the names in regular Etruscan.

flood, and crying aloud out of the waters of the sea'; that is, He cries aloud out of the multiform *confusion* (or, medley) of things mortal unto the Formless One who is above, 'Save my First-born from the lions.' [And in the same sense do they interpret all the similes concerning 'waterfloods,' and the promises of the Deity's never forgetting His chosen people.]

"The Ascension or Regeneration, that is, the conversion of the Carnal Man into the Spiritual, is thus explained by means of a curious perversion of words taken from different Psalms: 'Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates, that the King of Glory may come in. Who is this King of Glory? The very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people, He is the King of Glory, mighty in battle.' *Battle* signifies the war in your members ever being waged within this earthly creature made up of conflicting elements. *This* is the *gate* seen by Jacob as he was journeying into Mesopotamia; that is, the young man growing up out of the boy, and *Mesopotamia* signifies the stream of the Great Ocean which flows out of the middle of the Perfect Man. The same deity is called by the Phrygians PAPA, because He *appeased* the confusion and chaotic tumult which prevailed before His coming. For this name is the unanimous cry παῦε, παῦε,* of all things in Heaven, in Earth, and under the Earth, calling upon Him to *appease* the discord, and to 'send peace to men that were afar off'—that is, to the earthly and mortal—'and to them that were near' that is, to the spiritual and perfect. He is likewise called 'dead' by the Phrygians, inasmuch as he is *buried* within the tomb of the body; to which circumstance also apply the words, 'Ye are whited sepulchres, full of dead men's bones and all manner of uncleanness; because the Living Man doth not dwell within you.'

"'The dead shall rise from their graves' signifies that the Earthly Man shall be born again spiritual. Unless they pass

* A subsequent thousand years' experience of the blessings of ecclesiastical rule has furnished Walter de Mapes with a more humorous etymology for this title—

"*Papa*, si rem tangimus nomen habet a re,
Quidquid habent alii solus vult pappare:
Aut si nomen Gallicum vis apocopare,
Payez, payez dit le mot, si vis impetrare."

through this 'Gate' all continue dead, but him that hath passed through the Phrygians call a *god*, for he becomes a god, having passed through the Gate into Heaven. Paul means the same by his 'being caught up into the third heaven, and hearing unutterable things.' Again, 'the publicans and harlots shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you,' where *publicans* means the Gentiles 'upon whom the *ends* of the world have come'; * where 'ends' are the seeds of the universe scattered about by the Formless One, as is set forth by the Saviour, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,' declaring that none but the perfect Gnostics can comprehend this mystery.

"Those beloved by the Formless One are Pearls in this vessel of clay; and to them refers the precept, 'Cast not that which is holy to the dogs; neither throw your pearls before swine;' meaning sexual intercourse with women—an act fit only for dogs and swine. He is also called Αἰπόλος by the Phrygians, not because he really kept flocks, as the profane fancy, but because he is ὁ αἰεὶ πολῶν, 'he that ever turns' the universe in its due revolutions, whence the phrase, the 'poles' of heaven. And Homer (Od. iv. 384–85) says—

> 'Here *turns* about the truthful sea-god old,
> Immortal Proteus by the Egyptians called.'

"He is likewise styled 'Fruitful,' because 'the children of the widow shall be more than those of her that hath a husband;' that is, the *spiritual* who are born again, being immortal, are in number more (though but few of them are born into this life) than the *carnal*, who, in spite of their present multitude, do all perish utterly at last.

"The knowledge of the Perfect Man is very deep, and hard to be attained to. 'The *beginning* of perfection is the knowledge of man, but *absolute* perfection is the knowledge of God.' He (Adamas) is designated by the Phrygians as, 'the Green Wheat-ear cut off'; on this account, at the Eleusinian rites, the initiated hold up in silence to the Directors the wondrous mystery, the green ear of wheat. This wheat-ear is the Perfect Son descended from the Adamas above, the Great Giver

* A play upon τελῶναι and τέλη.

of light, like the Hierophant himself. This latter is not actually castrated like Attis, but emasculated by the use of hemlock, so that he despises all carnal pleasure; and whilst celebrating the mysteries amidst blazing torches, he cries aloud, 'The holy Brimo hath borne a sacred son, Brimos'—alluding to the Spiritual Birth. The rites are therefore named 'Eleusinian' and 'Anactorian,' from the Greek words signifying *Coming* and *Ascending*. This is what the initiated themselves declare concerning the mysteries of Proserpine; and of the road leading the defunct down to her the poet (Amphis) hath—

> 'But underneath her lies a rugged path,
> Hollow and muddy, yet the best to lead
> Down to the lovely groves of precious Venus.'

"These are the Lesser Mysteries, of *earthly* origin, 'in which men ought to rest themselves for a while, and then proceed to the Greater Mysteries,' that is, to heavenly regeneration.

"The Father of the All is furthermore called by the Phrygians 'Amygdalus,' *the Almond Tree;* not meaning the natural tree, but the Pre-existing One, who, having within himself the Perfect Fruit pulsating and moving about in his depths, *tore open* (διήμυξε) his bosom, and brought forth the Invisible, Ineffable Son, of whom we are treating.* He is moreover denominated the 'Piper,' because that which is born is the harmonious *Spirit* [or, *breath*, the Greek affording no distinction between the two senses of the word.] The Spirit is likewise called the Father, and the Son begotten by the Father; for the worship of the Perfect is not carnal, but spiritual: therefore, 'Neither in Jerusalem nor in this mountain shall ye worship any more.'

"*This* is the mystery of the Incomprehensible One, *furnished with innumerable eyes*, whom all Nature longeth after in different ways. [Perhaps an allusion to the Brahminical figure of Indra, god of the heavens.] This is the 'Word of God,' that is, the

* Some lurking tradition of this mystery may have suggested the machine of the almond (*machina della mandola*) containing the Archangel Gabriel, in the spectacle of the Annunciation constructed by Brunelleschi for the church of Sta. Croce. See Vasari's detailed account of this remarkable example of a miracle-play.

word of the declaration of his great power: 'Wherefore it shall be sealed up, and veiled, and hidden, lying in the dwelling-place, where is established the Root of all the Æons, Powers, thoughts [Platonic *Ideas*], gods, angels, spirit-messengers that are, that are not, begotten, unbegotten, comprehensible, incomprehensible, of the years, months, days, hours, moments, whence Time begins to grow and increase by particles. For a moment (or geometrical *point*), itself being nothing, made of nothing, indivisible, grows by accretion into a magnitude incomprehensible.' This is the Kingdom of Heaven, the grain of mustard seed, the Indivisible Point existing within every one, but only known unto the Spiritual Man.

"'There is neither speech nor language, but their voices are heard amongst them,' signifies that whatever men say or do, has all a *spiritual meaning* to the Perfect; even the actors in the theatre utter nothing without the intervention of the Deity. For when the audience are seated, and the actor comes upon the stage, clad in a gorgeous robe and twanging his lyre, he sings thus a great mystery without knowing what he says—'Whether thou be the offspring of Saturn, or of blessed Jove, or of the mighty Rhea, hail! *Thee* Assyrians call the thrice-desired *Adamas;* whilst Egypt styles Thee *Osiris;* the Greeks in their wisdom (esoteric knowledge) the *Moon's Holy Horn;* the Samothracians, the venerable *Adamnas;* the Hæmonians, *Corybas;* the Phrygians, at one time, Papa, the *Dead One;* at another, the *God*, or the *Barren One*, or the *Green Wheat-ear* cut off; or him whom the fruitful *Almond Tree* poses the man playing on the pipe.' *He* is the multiform *Attis*, whom they thus describe in their hymns: 'I will sing of Attis, the favourite of Rhea, with the clashing of cymbals, the bellowing of the Idæan pipe of the Curetes, and will intermingle the sound of Phœbus' lyre. Evoe! Evau! Thou that art like unto Pan, unto Bacchus, thou Shepherd of the white stars!'

"For these" (adds Hippolytus) "and other such like reasons, these Ophites frequent the Mysteries of the Great Mother, fancying that by means of what is done there they can see through the whole secret. But in reality they have not the least advantage over other people, except that they are not

emasculated, and yet they act as though they were. For they most strictly forbid all intercourse with women, and in every other respect, as we have fully described, they do the same things as the eunuchs, the regular priests of Rhea."

After giving an account of their worship and glorification of the Serpent (which I shall extract when treating of the Agathodæmon religion) Hippolytus thus continues:—"The foregoing is a sample of the insane, absurd, and interminable theories of the sect. But to show up, as far as lies in our power, their *unknowing* 'knowledge,' the following hymn* is here inserted, as containing a summary of the whole creed:—

"'The generative law of the All was the First Mind;
But the Second was the effused chaos of the First:
In the third place the Soul received a law, and began to operate.†
Whereupon She (the Soul) enveloped in the figure of a fawn,
Struggles with Death, suffering a probationary penance.
At one time, invested with royalty, she beholds the Light;
At another, cast down into misery, she weeps.
Now she weeps and rejoices;
Now she weeps and is judged;
Now she is judged and dies.
When shall her deliverance be?
The wretched one
Hath entered, as she strayed, into an evil labyrinth.
But Jesus said: Father, suffer me;
She in quest of evil (or, the chased of evil ones) upon earth
Wandereth about, destitute of Thy Spirit:
She seeketh to escape from the bitter chaos,
But knoweth not how to pass through.
For this cause send me, O Father!
I will go down holding the Seals,
I will pass through all the Æons;
I will reveal all the mysteries;
I will manifest the forms of the gods;‡
And the hidden secrets of the holy way
I will teach, giving unto them the name of GNOSIS.'

"This, therefore, is the system (or pretension) of the Naaseni, who designate themselves 'the Gnostics.' But this

* This hymn is written in anapæstic verses; its text is in many places hopelessly corrupted by the transcriber. I have therefore often been obliged to conjecture the original sense.

† An enunciation of the fundamental doctrine "All is Three," already stated by Hippolytus.

‡ That is, will disclose to the faithful the different figures of the Archons of the lower spheres, a promise fulfilled at much length by the author of the Pistis-Sophia.

deception of theirs being multiform, and having many heads like the Hydra of fable, if I smite all the heads at a single blow with the wand of Truth, I shall destroy the whole serpent, for all the other sects differ but little from this in essentials."

Hippolytus has not given a connected analysis of the Ophite system; he probably deemed it superfluous labour, as having been already done with much exactness by Irenæus in his great work, to which the former occasionally refers as being then in everybody's hands. To the Bishop of Lugdunum, therefore, we must apply for this information, which will be found given at much length in Chapters xxxi.–xxxiii. of the First Book of his History. He states that the Ophites, like other Gnostics, rejected the Old Testament altogether as the work of a subordinate divinity, and containing nothing of the revelations of their *Sophia*, or Divine Wisdom; whilst they held that the New, although originally of higher authority, had been so corrupted by the interpolations of the Apostles as to have lost all value as a revelation of Divine truth. They drew the chief supports of their tenets out of the various "Testaments" and similar books then current, and ascribed to the Patriarchs and the most ancient Prophets, for example, the book of Enoch.

The primary article of this doctrine was the Emanation of all things from the One Supreme, long utterly unknown to mankind, and at last only revealed to a very small number capable of receiving such enlightenment. Hence he is named *Bythos*, "Profundity," to express his unfathomable, inscrutable nature. Following the Zoroastrian and the Kabbalistic nomenclature they also designated Him as the "Fountain of Light," and "The Primal Man," giving for reason of the latter title that "Man was created after the *image* of God," which proved the nature of the prototype.

The *Beginning* of Creation, that is, the Primal *Idea*, or Emanation, was the "thought," *Ennoia*, of Bythos, who bears also the significant name of *Sige*, "Silence." This *Idea* being the first act of creation of the Primal Man, is therefore properly denominated the "Second Man." Ennoia is the consort (compare the Hindoo *Darga*) of Bythos, and she produced *Pneuma*, "the

Spirit," who, being the source of all created things, is entitled "the Mother of all living," and likewise *Sophia*, the wisdom from on high. As the mother of all living, Sophia is the medium between the intellectual and material worlds. In consequence of this, when Bythos and Ennoia, charmed with her beauty, furnished her with the divine Light, Sophia produced two new Emanations—the one perfect, *Christos*, the other imperfect, *Sophia-Achamoth.* (This scheme resembles the Buddhistic; Bythos answering to the First Buddha; Sige, Sophia, Christos, Achamoth, Ildabaoth, to the successive other Five.)

Of these emanations Christos was designed for the guide of all who proceed from God; Achamoth, for the guide of all proceeding out of matter; nevertheless, the Perfect One was intended to assist and lead upwards his imperfect sister.

Furthermore, the Spirit rests upon Chaos, or the *waters of Creation*, which are Matter, Water, Darkness, the Abyss. This Chaos was devoid of all *life*, for life proceeds ultimately from the Supreme, who has no connection whatever with Matter. Neither could his purely intellectual daughter, Sophia, act directly upon it; she therefore employed for agent her own emanation, Achamoth, whose mixed imperfect nature fitted her for that office.

This First Tetrad, Bythos, Ennoia, Sige, Sophia, were in the meantime creating *Ecclesia*, the Idea of the Holy Church. But the imperfect Achamoth upon descending into Chaos, lost her way there, and became ambitious of creating a world entirely for herself. She floated about in the Abyss, delighted at imparting life and motion to the inert elements, until she became so hopelessly entangled in Matter as to be unable to extricate herself from its trammels. In this condition she produced the creator of the *material* world, the Demiurgus, Ildabaoth.

But after this event, Achamoth feeling the intolerable burden of her material part, after long and repeated efforts, at length struggled forth out of Chaos. She had never belonged to the Pleroma, but she attained to the "Middle Space"; where she entirely shook off her material part, and determined to erect a barrier between the World of Intelligence and the World of

Matter. Ildabaoth, "Son of Darkness," creator and tyrant of the Lower World, followed the example of Bythos in producing subordinate Emanations. First of all he generated an Angel in his own likeness; this Angel a second; and so on up to the number of six. These are all reflexions one of the other; but they inhabit, with their father, Ildabaoth, seven different regions; to which the Middle Space, dominion of their origin Achamoth, forms the eighth. Their names are Iao, Sabaoth, Adonai, Eloi, Ouraios, Astaphaios. They became the Genii of the seven worlds, or planetary spheres. The first four names are the mystic titles of the God of the Jews—degraded thus by the Ophites into appellations of the subordinates of the Creator; the two last signify the forces of Fire and Water.

In this degradation of the names most sacred in the Jewish theology, is clearly to be recognised, the very teaching of those "dreamers" reprobated by Jude, v. 8 for despising "Dominion," and speaking evil of "Dignities." For "Dominion" is the "Empire" in the Sephiroth (see page 35) to which the Kabbala assigned the title *Adonai*. Now we find here the Ophites making Adonai the *third* son of Ildabaoth, a malevolent Genius, and like his father and brethren, the eternal adversary of the Christ. The "Dignities" mean the other personages of the Sephiroth, similarly dishonoured by the new doctrine. Jude shows plainly whom he had in view by contrasting in the next verse the audacity of these "blasphemers" with the respect shown by the Archanged Michael towards his opponent on account of his *angelic nature*, however fallen from his high estate. By a most singular coincidence (much too close to have been merely accidental), Jude's censure, nay, his very expressions are repeated by Peter in his second Epistle (ii. 10). If either of these Epistles were really written by the Apostles whose names they bear, these passages bring to light the very early existence of this school of Gnosticism, which indeed may have been founded before the promulgation of Christianity. But to return to the operations of Ildabaoth. Besides the Spirits above mentioned, he generated Archangels, Angels, Virtues, and Powers presiding over all the details of the creation. Ildabaoth was far from being a pure spirit; ambition

and pride dominated in his composition. He therefore resolved to break off all connection with his mother, Achamoth, and to create a world entirely for himself. Aided by his own Six Spirits, he created Man, intending him for the image of his power; but he failed utterly in his work, his Man proving a vast, soulless monster, crawling upon the earth. The Six Spirits were obliged to bring their work again before their father, to be animated: he did so by communicating the ray of Divine Light which he himself had inherited from Achamoth, who by this loss punished him for his pride and self-sufficiency.

Man, thus favoured by Achamoth at the expense of her own son, followed the impulse of the Divine Light that she had transferred to him, collected a further supply out of the creation with which it was intermingled, and began to present not the image of his creator Ildabaoth, but rather that of the Supreme Being, the "Primal Man." At this spectacle the Demiurgus was filled with rage and envy at having produced a being so superior to himself. His looks, inspired by his passions, were reflected in the Abyss, as in a mirror, the image became instinct with life, and forth arose "Satan Serpent-formed," *Ophiomorphos*, the embodiment of envy and cunning. He is the combination of all that is most base in matter with the hate, envy and craft of Spiritual Intelligence. Out of their normal hatred for Judaism, the Ophites gave this being the name of *Michael*, the guardian angel of the Jewish nation according to Daniel (v. 21). But they also called him *Samiel*, the Hebrew name of the Prince of the Devils.

In consequence of his spite at the creation of Man, Ildabaoth set to work to create the three kingdoms of Nature, the Animal, the Vegetable, and the Mineral; with all the defects and evils they now exhibit. Next, in order to regain possession of the best of things, he resolved to confine Man within his own exclusive domain. In order to detach him from his protectress Achamoth, and from the celestial region, he forbade him to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, which could reveal the mysteries and confer on him the graces from above. But Achamoth, in order to defeat his scheme, sent her own Genius, Ophis, in the form

of a serpent to induce him to transgress the commandment, and so to break the Law of Jealousy. Though not so stated, it would appear that the serpent-form was put on by Achamoth's minister in order to escape the vigilance of Ildabaoth, under the disguise of his offspring Satan, Ophiomorphos.

Enlightened by eating the forbidden fruit, Man became capable of comprehending heavenly things. Nevertheless Ildabaoth was sufficiently powerful to revenge himself, which he did by shutting up the First Pair in the prison-house of Matter, that is, in the *body*, so unworthy of his nature, wherein Man is still enthralled. Achamoth, however, continued to protect him: she had extracted from his composition and absorbed into herself the divine Spark of Light; and ceased not to supply him therewith, and defend him in all his trials.

And of this there was full need. A new enemy had come into the field against Man, the Genius Ophis whom Ildabaoth had seized, and punished for his share in the affair of the Tree of Knowledge, by casting him down into the Abyss; and who, contaminated by his immersion in Matter, became converted into the exact image of his fellow-prisoner, Ophiomorphos. The former was the type, the latter the antitype, and the two are often confounded together. Thus we get a third dualism into the scheme. Sophia and Sophia-Achamoth, Adam-Kadmon and Adam, Ophis and Ophiomorphos. Ophis, at first Man's friend, now began to hate him as the cause (though innocent) of his own degradation. With Ildabaoth, and his Sons, he continually seeks to chain him to the body, by inspiring him with all manner of corrupt desires, more especially earthly love and the appetites. But Achamoth supplies Man with the divine Light, through which he became sensible of his *Nakedness*, that is, of the misery of his condition of imprisonment in this body of death, where his only consolation is the hope of ultimate release.

But the seductions of Ildabaoth and his crew gained over all the offspring of Adam, except Seth, the true type of the Spiritual Man: and his posterity kept alive the seed of Light and the knowledge of divine Truth throughout all the generations following. When they in the Wilderness received

the commandments and institutions of Ildabaoth and his Sons, the Planetary Genii, and afterwards the teaching of the Prophets, inspired from the same source, Achamoth infused into their predictions something higher, comprehended not even by their Lord, and made them preach the advent of the Primal Man, the eternal Æon, the heavenly Christ. [The same notion was a favourite one with the Mediæval *Cathari.*]

Achamoth was so afflicted at the condition of Man that she never rested until she had prevailed on her mother, the celestial Sophia, to move Bythos into sending down the Christ to the aid of the Spiritual Sons of Seth. Ildabaoth himself had been caused to make ready the way for his coming through his own minister, John the Baptist; in the belief that the kingdom Christ came to establish was merely a *temporal* one: a supposition fostered in him by the contrivance of Achamoth. Besides inducing him to send the Precursor, she made him cause the birth of the *Man* Jesus by the Virgin Mary; because the creation of a *material* person could only be the work of the Demiurgus; not falling within the province of a higher power. As soon as the Man Jesus was born, the Christ, uniting himself with Sophia, descended through the seven planetary regions, assuming in each an analogous form, thus concealing his true nature from their presiding Genii, whilst he attracted into himself the sparks of the divine Light they still retained in their essence. [These "analogous forms" are explained by the fact that the Ophite Diagramma figured Michael as a *lion*, Suriel as a *bull*, Raphael as a *serpent*, Gabriel as an *eagle*, Sabaoth as a *bear*, Erataoth as a *dog*, Ouriel as an *ass.*] In this manner the Christ entered into the man Jesus at the moment of his baptism in the Jordan. From this time forth Jesus began to work miracles; before that He had been entirely ignorant of his own mission. But Ildabaoth at last discovering that he was subverting his own kingdom upon earth, stirred up the Jews against him, and caused him to be put to death. When he was on the cross, the Christ and Sophia left his body, and returned to their own place. Upon his death the Two took the Man Jesus, abandoned his *Material* body to the earth, and gave him a new one made out of the Æther. Thenceforth he consisted

merely of soul and spirit, which was the cause why the Disciples did not recognise him after his resurrection. During his sojourn upon earth of *eighteen* months after he had risen, he received from Sophia that perfect knowledge, the true Gnosis, which he communicated to the small portion of the Apostles who were capable of receiving the same. Thence, ascending up into the Middle Space, he sat down upon the right hand of Ildabaoth although unperceived by him, and there he is collecting all souls that have been purified through the knowledge of Christ. When he shall have collected all the Spiritual, all the Light, out of Ildabaoth's empire, Redemption is accomplished and the end of the world arrived: which means nothing else than the reabsorption of all Light into the Pleroma from which it had originally descended.

The sect were divided in their opinions as to the nature of Ophis. Although agreed that this genius was in the beginning the *minister* of Achamoth, the Ophites of Theodoret's time held that he had been converted into the enemy of Man; although by inducing him to break the commandment of Ildabaoth he had proved the final cause of Man's deliverance from his power. But all these nice distinctions, and complicated machinery of Redemption were the invention of the later schools: unknown to the sect described by Hippolytus. For the primitive Ophites, retaining the Egyptian veneration for the Agathodæmon, regarded their serpent, The Naas, as identical with either Sophia, or the Christ. That writer says positively "the *Naas* (Hebrew, *Nachash*) is the *only* thing they worship, whence they are denominated *Naaseni*. Even two centuries later when Epiphanius wrote, they employed a living tame serpent to encircle and consecrate the loaves that were to be eaten at the Eucharistic supper. Again Tertullian has (In Præscript.) "Serpentem magnificant in tantum ut etiam Christo præferant"—a passage that suggests that their *ophis* was connected with the antique Solar Genius of the Pharaonic religion. It was a peculiarity of the Egyptians that, like the present Hindoos, they were divided, as it were, into sects, each of which adopted some one deity out of the Pantheon for the exclusive object of worship, paying no regard to all the

rest. As in modern Hindooism Vishnu and Siva have engrossed the religion of the country, so in the Egypt of the first Christian century Anubis and Cnuph had become the sole objects of Egyptian veneration, as the monuments hereafter to be reviewed will abundantly evince.

To establish the identity of their Ophis with the Saviour, his followers adduced the words of St. John, "For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." All this proves that the section of the Ophites which regarded the serpent as *evil* by its nature, had been led astray from the primitive doctrine of their sect by the prevailing Zoroastrian and Jewish notions upon that subject. The creed of the original Gnostics, the Naaseni, gave a very different view of the nature of the serpent considered merely as a type; a fact which shall be established in the section on the Agathodæmon worship.

Epiphanius gives the following abstract of their doctrine to explain their reverence for the serpent as the true author of divine *knowledge*. "The Supreme Æon having produced other Æons, one of these, a female, named Prunicos (i.e. *Concupiscence*), descended into the waters of the abyss: whence, not being able to extricate herself, she remained suspended in the Middle Space, being too much clogged by matter to return above, and yet not sinking lower where there was nothing cognate to her nature. In this condition she produced Ildabaoth, the God of the Jews; and he in his turn seven Æons or Angels, who created the seven heavens. From these seven Æons Ildabaoth shut up all that was above, lest they should know of anything superior to himself. The seven Æons then created Man in the image of their Father, but prone, and crawling upon earth like a worm. But the Heavenly Mother, Prunicos, wishing to deprive Ildabaoth of the power wherewith she had unadvisedly invested him, infused into Man a celestial spark—the soul. Straightway man rose up on his feet, soared in mind beyond the limits of the eight spheres, and glorified the Supreme Father, Him who is above Ildabaoth. Hence Ildabaoth, full of jealousy, cast down his eyes upon the lower layer of Matter, and begat a Virtue, whom they call his Son. Eve,

listening to him as the Son of God, was easily persuaded to eat of the Tree of Knowledge." Such is the brief summary of Ophite tenets, as given by Epiphanius. The details of the elaborate system given in the preceding pages are extracted from Theodoret who flourished half a century later.

FIG. 4.

MACHINERY OF THE GNOSIS.

The *doctrines* of the chief schools of Gnosticism having been fully described in the preceding sections, the next step in the natural order of things will be to consider the MACHINERY employed by its teachers to set forth these new doctrines.

The deities of the ancient mythology continued to hold their place in the productions of the great sect whose birth-place was Alexandria, and consequently some insight into the sense in which the novel theosophy adopted them may be obtained by learning what were the powers and attributes of these same gods, when their worship held undisputed possession of the country. On this account, the chief deities of Egypt, and the figures under which they are recognised, must now be briefly described—together with their Coptic titles, so often found on these monuments in strange companionship with the holy names of the Jewish creed, with the Magian Genii, even with the appellatives of Hindoo gods—the very terminology of the religion plainly indicating its remote and multifarious sources.

1. The great god of Lower Egypt, Phthas (phonetic, Ptah), is represented in a close-fitting robe, with his feet joined together, and standing upon a base of *four* steps, called the "Four Foundations," and which typified the Four Elements, of which he was the grand artificer—an emblem long afterwards taken in the same acceptation by the Rosicrucians, sometimes he appears as a dwarf and Priapean; sometimes as Phtha-Tore with a beetle forehead. His proper attribute is the Cynocephalus baboon. His four sons, the Cabiri, are painted as little ugly dwarfs, bearing for badges of office, *a sword, a crocodile, a serpent, a human head* stuck on a hook. They become in the hierarchy of the Pistis-Sophia the "Collectors unto Wrath" (ἐριναῖοι), whose office is to accuse souls in the Judgment. The many-armed Genius brandishing similar weapons, often found on Gnostic talismans, probably expresses the same idea in a condensed form.

2. Ammon (phonetically, Amen) has a human, and occasionally a ram's, head, from which rises a parti-coloured plume. He is modified into "Pan-Mendes," Priapean, and brandishing a whip. In the character of "Ammon-Chnubis" he has his feet bound together, and wears the horns of a goat. He is often figured as the serpent, called by the Greeks the "Agathodæmon." His symbol is the *vase* "Canopus," for so the Greeks pronounce the name of Chnubis. United with the sun, he becomes "Ammon-Ra."

3. The Sun-god, Phre, or Ra, depicted with the head of a hawk, supporting the solar disc entwined with the serpent Uraeus.

4. Thoth or Thoyt, ibis-headed, is the "Scribe of the gods." Sometimes he takes the head of a hawk, and becomes the famous "Hermes Trismegistus." His symbol is the winged orb, *Tat*, answering to the *Mir* of the Persians. (He is the prophet Enoch's fourth rebellious angel, Penumuc, "who discovered unto the children of men bitterness and sweetness, and pointed out to them every unit of their wisdom. He taught men to understand writing, and the use of ink and paper. Therefore numerous have been those who have gone astray, from every period of the world even to this day. For men were not born for this, thus with pen and with ink to confirm their faith." [lxviii. 10. 13.])

5. Sochos is depicted with the head of a crocodile, and is also symbolised by a crocodile with the tail bent.

6. The Moon-god, Pa-Ioh, (*Pa*, being the Coptic definite article) is represented having his feet close together; upon his head is a single lock of hair and the crescent. At other times, this deity is figured bi-sexual, and casting gold dust over the heavens, that is, bespangling them with the stars.

7. Osiris is a human figure distinguished by his lofty conical helmet, and holding a crook and a whip. The eye is his symbol.

8. Aroeres (Aroi), the Horus of the Greeks, has a single lock of hair upon his head. He is figured as being suckled by Isis and again, as seated upon the lotus; he also occasionally wears the head of a hawk, as being one character of the Solar god.

His symbol, the hawk, appears upon the breast of Isis in a torso in the Borgia Collection.

9. Anubis (Anbo) is always jackal-headed, and sometimes has also a human one head, springing from a separate neck. His Coptic name, ANBΩ, may often be observed in Gnostic legends.

10. Bebon, or Bebys, has the head of a hippopotamus, or a crocodile, and carries a sword: a figure which used to be taken for Typhon. He stands for the constellation Ursa Major in the Zodiac of Denderah.

Of *goddesses* the principal are—

1. Neith: expressed by the Vulture, or else by a female with head of a vulture, or lion. In the last case she takes the name of Taf-net. She symbolizes the vault of Heaven.

2. Athor: with the head of a cow, or else of a woman covered with the skin of the Royal Vulture. She is denoted hieroglyphically by a hawk placed within a square.

3. Isis: a female with horns of a cow, between which rests a disk, the lunar circle.

4. Sate: the Grecian Hera, wearing tall plumes on her head, and sometimes personified with a feather in place of head, stands for "Truth," in which latter quality she appears regularly at the Judgment of the Soul.

The Four Genii of the Amenthes, or Hades, are represented with the heads of a man, jackal, baboon, and hawk, respectively; and are often placed together like mummy-shaped figures, forming the Canopic Vases.

The *symbols* of the same worship have been to some extent explained by persons writing at a time when they were still a living, though fast expiring, language. Of such writers the most valuable is Plutarch, who in his curious treatise 'De Iside et Osiride,' has given the meaning of several of these symbols, and, as it would appear, upon very good authority. According to him, Isis sometimes signifies the Moon, in which sense she is denoted by a *Crescent;* sometimes the Earth as fecundated by the waters of the Nile. For this reason water, as the seed of Osiris, was carried in a vase in the processions in honour of this goddess.

Osiris is denoted by the picture of an *Eye* and *Sceptre;* his

name being compounded of *Os* "many," and *iris* "eye." Upon this point Macrobius states (Sat. I. 21), "The Egyptians, in order to denote that Osiris means the Sun, whenever they want to express his name in hieroglyphic writing, engrave a Sceptre and on top thereof the figure of an Eye; and by this symbol they express 'Osiris,' signifying this god to be the Sun, riding on high in regal power, and looking down upon all things, because antiquity hath surnamed the Sun the 'Eye of Jupiter.'"

The *Fig-leaf* stands for "King"; and also for the "South."

The *Lizard*, which was believed to conceive through the ear, and to bring forth through the mouth, is the type of the generation of the Word, that is, the *Logos*, or Divine Wisdom. (This belief explains the appearance of a lizard upon the breast of certain figures of Minerva.) *

The *Scarabeus*, in its making spherical receptacles for its eggs, and by its retrograde motion, imitates the action and movement of the Sun. This insect had no female, according to the popular belief of the Egyptians.

The *Asp* expresses a planet, for like that luminary, it moves rapidly, though without any visible organ of locomotion.

The *Ibis* stands for the Moon: the legs of the bird, when extended, making an equilateral triangle. (It is hard to discern any analogy between the Moon and this figure of geometry, but yet the Pythagoreans denoted Athene by the same sign. But that Plutarch is here correct is proved by many gems which show a triangle set upon an altar and adored by the baboon, Luna's favourite beast.) How the later Egyptians symbolised the Sun and Moon is well expressed upon a jasper (Waterton) where Horus, seated on the lotus, is adored by the baboon; in the field are the sun-star and the crescent attached to their respective figures, and also the *Triangle* very conspicuously placed.

Horus—Plutarch remarks—wears a crown of the branches of the Persea, because its fruit resembles in shape the *heart;* its leaves, the *tongue*. The legend goes that the tree (*Cordia myxa*, or Sebestene plum) was first planted at Memphis by the hero *Perseus*, whence its name. In memory of his mythic ancestor,

* Of which a fine example, an intaglio, is figured in the Museum Odescalchum.

Alexander ordered that a garland of Persea leaves should form the prize at the games he instituted at his new Capital. The tree never wants a succession of flowers and fruit; the latter Pliny compares to a red plum, adding that it will not grow in Europe.

We next come to a professed treatise upon this recondite subject, Horapollo's 'Interpretation of the Sacred Animals.' Unfortunately, this work bears upon its face clear evidence of having been excogitated by some pragmatical Alexandrian Greek, totally ignorant of what he was writing about, but impudently passing off his own stupid *conjectures* as to the meaning of the figures on the ancient works surrounding him, as though they were interpretations handed down to him by antique authority. He must have written under the Lower Empire, when the art of reading hieroglyphics was entirely lost, for we know that it still existed in the first century; Tacitus particularly notes that an *aged* priest read to Germanicus upon his visit to Thebes the contents of the historical tablets on the edifices of that city. "Mox visit veterum Thebarum magna vestigia; et manebant structis molibus literæ Ægyptiæ priscam opulentiam complexæ, jussusque e senioribus sacerdotum patrium sermonem interpretari" (Ann. II. 60). This happened A.D. 19. It would appear that the knowledge of hieroglyphics was fast dying out, and only preserved by members of the previous generation.*

It is only in a few instances that Horapollo has preserved some genuine tradition of the meaning of those symbols which were the most generally used, and therefore the last to be forgotten. Of these explanations the most important are what follow.

"The *Cynocephalus* baboon denotes the Moon, because that beast has a certain sympathy with the luminary, and during her dark quarter sits without eating, his eyes fixed upon the

* But the Demotic writing must have lingered much longer in use, for Capitolinus, cap. 34, mentions the "Egyptian" as one of the current alphabets of the third century. "The soldiers raised a tomb to Gordian at Circeium Castrum, on the confines of Persia; placing upon this edifice (*moles*) an epitaph in Greek, Latin, Persian, Jewish, and *Egyptian* letters, so that it might be read by everybody. "Divo Gordiano, victori Persarum, victori Gothorum, victori Sarmatarum, depulsori Romanarum seditionum, victori Germanorum, sed non victori Philipporum."

ground as though mourning for her loss. He moreover denotes the *priestly order*, because he is naturally circumcised, and abhors fish and fishermen. Erect and with uplifted paws and a basilisk (asp) upon his head, he symbolises the New Moon, whose first appearance he hails after this fashion. By his voiding his urine at fixed and regular intervals, he first suggested to observers the regular division of the day into hours, and furnished the first idea of the invention of the *Clepsydra*, or water-clock.

"The *Dog* (Jackal) represents the sacred scribe: because that functionary ought to be always studying, and likewise should *bark at*, and make himself disagreeable to, everybody. In another sense he expresses a Prophet, from his habit of staring fixedly at the statues of the gods.

"The *Hawk* means 'God,' or 'Sun.'

"The *Lion*, from the resemblance of his *round* face to the solar orb, is placed beneath the throne of *Horus*, the Egyptian title of the Sun.

"The Rising of the Nile, called in Coptic *Nov* or *Nev*, is denoted by three large vases; and also by a lion, because it attains its full height when the Sun is in that sign of the Zodiac; for which same cause the spouts of the sacred lavers are made in the shape of lions' heads.

"By the *Ibis* is signified the *heart*, because the bird belongs to Hermes, who presides over the heart and all reason. The Ibis also, by its own shape, resembles the form of the heart; concerning which matter there is a very long legend current amongst the Egyptians."

But the most graphic account of the symbols and ceremonies employed in the worship of Isis, whilst yet in its full glory (the middle of the second century), is to be obtained from the description of her Procession which Apuleius (himself one of the initiated) has penned in the eleventh Book of his "Golden Ass." "Next flow on the crowds of people initiated into the divine mysteries; men and women of every rank, and all ages, shining in the pure whiteness of linen robes; the latter having their dripping hair enveloped in a transparent covering: the former with their heads shaven clean, and the crowns thereof

shining white—these earthly stars of the nocturnal ceremony, raising as they went a shrill tinkling with *sistra* of bronze, silver, and even of gold. But the chief performers in the rites were those nobles, who, clad in a tight-fitting robe of linen descending from the waist down to the heels, carried in the procession the glorious symbols of the most potent deities.

"The first held out at arm's length a *lamp*, diffusing before him a brilliant light; not by any means resembling in form the lamps in common use for illuminating our evening meals, but a golden bowl supporting a more ample blaze in the midst of its broad expanse. The second, similarly robed, held up with both hands the *Altar* that derives its name from the beneficent *Providence* of the supreme goddess. The third marched along bearing aloft a *palm branch* with leaves formed of thin gold, and also the *Caduceus* of Hermes. The fourth displayed the symbol of Justice, the figure of the *left hand* with the palm open, which, on account of its natural inactivity, and its being endowed with neither skill nor cunning, has been deemed a more fitting emblem of Justice than the right hand. The same minister likewise carried a small golden vestibule made in a round form like an *udder*, out of which he poured libations of milk. The fifth carried a *winnowing fan* piled up with golden sprigs. The last of all bore a huge *wine jar*.

"Immediately after these came the Deities, condescending to walk upon human feet, the foremost among them rearing terrifically on high his dog's head and neck—that messenger between heaven and hell displaying alternately a face black as night, and golden as the day; in his left the caduceus, in his right waving aloft the green palm branch. His steps were closely followed by a cow, raised into an upright posture—the cow being the fruitful emblem of the Universal Parent, the goddess herself, which one of the happy train carried with majestic steps, supported on his shoulders. By another was borne the coffin containing the sacred things, and closely concealing the deep secrets of the holy religion. Another carried in his happy bosom the awful figure of the Supreme Deity, not represented in the image of a beast either tame or wild, nor of a bird, nor even in that of man, but *ingeniously devised* and

inspiring awe by its very strangeness, that ineffable symbol of the deepest mystery, and ever to be shrouded in the profoundest silence. But next came, carried precisely in the same manner, a small vessel made of burnished gold, and most skilfully wrought out into a hemispherical bottom, embossed externally with strange Egyptian figures. Its mouth, but slightly raised, was extended into a spout, and projected considerably beyond the body of the bowl, whilst on the opposite side, widening as it receded into a capacious opening, it was affixed to the handle, upon which was seated an asp wreathed into a knot, and rearing up on high its streaked, swollen and scaly neck."

These images and symbols require a few remarks in elucidation: suggested by the notices of ancient writers, or by the representations of these very objects upon extant monuments of the same religion. The "udder-shaped" vessel exactly describes the one so frequently placed upon the Gnostic gems, and which Matter so strangely interprets as the "Vase of Sins" of the deceased—an unlikely subject to be selected for a talisman intended to secure the *benevolence* of heaven. Much more to the purpose is Köhler's conjecture that it is one of the earthen pots used to be tied round the circumference of the irrigating wheel, still employed for raising the water of the Nile to fertilise the adjacent fields; "fecundating Isis with the seed of Osiris" in ancient phrase, and certainly the *string* fastened about its top favours such an explanation; in fact, we have an example of similar veneration for a vessel in the case of the Canopus, the pot that held the same water when purified for drinking. The "winnow-fan" is also often represented, placed over this hemispherical vase; the same instrument played an important part in the marriage ceremony of the Greeks. When piled with fruit of all kinds, it was placed on the head of the bride; the same significant article, a broad, shallow basket, was the cradle of the infant Bacchus—the "mystica vannus Iacchi." The golden "Bowl," serving for lamp, often figures amongst the various emblems adorning our talismans. The "Sistrum" got its peculiar outline from the Indian *Yoni* (emblem of the female sex), and it was on account of its similar shape the almond, *luz*, was also held sacred in Egypt, which seems the

true origin of the "vesica piscis," serving as the inclosure for divine figures. The British Museum possesses a Hindoo altar in hardstone, neatly polished, having its flat top formed into the shape of the *lingam-yoni;* at each corner of the square a little idol is squatted. This Indian figure, signifying the Active and Passive Powers of Nature in conjunction for the work of Creation, is sculptured like a round shallow basin, with long projecting lips tapering to a twist, with an obtuse cone rising out of its middle. Now this is the exact shape of a large brown lamp from Herculaneum (Caylus, vii. pl. 33), only that from its centre, instead of a cone, springs a bent fore-finger, *digitus obscœnus* (with the same meaning as the lingam) serving for handle to carry it by, whilst from the sides project the three arms of the Egyptian *Tau.* This vessel must have belonged to the Isis-worship in that town, no doubt as popular there as it is known to have been at the neighbouring Pompeii. As for the office of "Anubis-bearer," it is related that when Commodus discharged that duty in the procession, he gratified the insane cruelty of his nature by cracking the shaven skulls of all within reach with the weighty head of the idol; and it seems to follow as a matter of course that the Anubis of Apuleius, in order to display *alternately* an ebon and a golden visage, must have possessed a *pair* of heads, human and canine, just as he is figured, holding the caduceus and palm upon certain Basilidan gems. Lastly, the mysterious image, too awful to be described, but whose nature is darkly hinted at as neither of *bird, beast,* nor *man.* These very expressions would tempt me to believe a compound of all three; in a word, the veritable figure of the Abraxas god. And be it remembered that this image was the "Supreme God," and he, we know, was the IAO of Egypt. This idol must have been of *small* dimensions, for it was carried in the *bosom* of the devotee's robe, and my suspicion is strongly confirmed by the existence in the late Mertens-Schaffhausen Collection of a bronze statuette, five inches in height, found in the south of France, and thus described in the Catalogue. "No 2002. Statuette of Iao standing, armed with cuirass, shield and whip; his head in the form of a cock's, his legs terminating in serpents."

PART II.

THE WORSHIP OF MITHRAS AND SERAPIS.

"O voi ch' avete gl' intelletti sani,
Mirate la dottrina che s' asconde
Sotto il velame degli versi strani."

"Salve vera Deûm facies, vultusque paterne,
Octo et sexcentis numeris cui litera trina
Conformat sacrum nomen, cognomen et
Omen. (Mart. Capella. Hymn. ad Sol.)

ΦΡΗ = ΤΗϹ = ⊢I⊣ = ⊢X⊣.

THE WORSHIP OF MITHRAS.

I. ORIGIN OF MITHRAICISM.

THE innumerable monuments of every kind bequeathed to us by the widely-spread worship of the deity styled *Mithras*, serve, at the same time, copiously to illustrate the important contributions of Zoroastrian doctrine towards the composition of Gnosticism. The Mithraic religion, according to Plutarch, first made its appearance in Italy upon Pompey's reduction of the Cilician Pirates, of whom it was the national worship; * and who, when broken up into colonists and slaves all over Italy, propagated it amongst their conquerors. In the new soil the novel religion flourished so rapidly as, in the space of two centuries, to supersede (coupled with the earlier introduced Serapis worship) the primitive Hellenic and Etruscan deities. In fact, long before this final triumph over the sceptical, Pliny appears disposed to accept Mithraicism, in its essential principle, as the only religion capable of satisfying a rational inquirer; as may be deduced from this noble passage (ii. 4): "Eorum medius Sol fervidus, amplissima magnitudine, nec temporum modo terrarumque sed siderum etiam ipsorum cœlique Rector. Hanc esse mundi totius animam ac planius mentem, nunc principale Naturæ regimen ac *Numen* credere decet, opera ejus æstimantes. Hic lumen rebus ministrat, aufertque tenebras, hic reliqua

* This deity, under other titles, had ever been the great god of Pontus. As patron of Sinope he appears under the form of Helios-Dionysos, upon the medallion of Pharnaces II. In his proper name he was the patron of Trebizond, being worshipped on the Mount Mithras overhanging that most ancient of Grecian colonies. For destroying his statue, the fanatic Eugenius, justly punished by Diocletian, was adopted, in the succeeding times of superstition, for the tutelary saint of the Byzantine Empire of Trebizond.

sidera occultat, illustrat; hic vices temporum annumque semper renascentem ex usu Naturæ temperat, hic cœli tristitiam discutit, atque etiam humani nubila animi serenat: hic suum lumen cæteris quoque sideribus fœnerat; præclarus, eximius, omnia intuens, omnia etiam exaudiens; at principi literarum Homero placuisse in uno eo video. Quapropter effigiem Dei formamque quærere imbecillitatis humanæ rear. Quisquis est Deus, *si modo est alius*, et quacunque in parte, totus est sensus, totus visus, totus auditus, totus animæ, totus animi, totus sui." Thus, during the second and third centuries of the Roman Empire, Mithras and Serapis had come almost to engross the popular worship, even to the remotest limits of the known world. For Mithraicism was originally the religion taught by Zoroaster, although somewhat changed and materialized so as better to assimilate itself to the previously established Nature Worship of the West. Under this grosser form it took its name from *Mithras*, who in the Zendavesta is not the Supreme Being (Ormuzd), but the Chief of the subordinate Powers, the Seven Amshaspands. Mithra is the Zend name for the sun, the proper *mansion* of this Spirit, but not the Spirit himself. Hence the great oath of Artaxerxes Mnemon was, "By the light of Mithras," a counterpart of the tremendous adjuration of our William the Conqueror, "By the Splendour of God!" But the materialistic Greeks at once identified the Persian Spirit with their own substantial Phœbus and Hyperion. Thus Ovid has,

"Placat equo Persis radiis Hyperiona cinctum." (Fasti I. 335.)

In this view of his nature Mithras was identified with other types of the Sun-god, such as the "Phanaces" of Asia Minor, and the "Dionysos" of Greece; and thereby soon usurped the place of the latter in the long established Mysteries, the ancient Dionysia. The importance into which the Mithraica had grown by the middle of the second century may be estimated from a fact mentioned by Lampridius, that the emperor himself (Commodus) condescended to be initiated into them. Nay more, with their penances, and tests of the courage of the neophyte, they may be said to have been maintained by unbroken tradition through the secret societies of the Middle Ages, then by the Rosicrucians,

down to that faint reflex of the latter, the Freemasonry of our own times. But this curious point must be reserved for the last Section of this Treatise investigating the nature of the last named societies. My present object is to point out the gradations by which the Mithraic principle passed into the Egyptian and semi-Christian forms of Gnosticism.

The mystic name *Abraxas* (asserted to have been the coinage of the Alexandrian Basilides) is said to mean either in actual Coptic "Holy Name" (as Bellermann will have it); or, as seems equally probable, is merely the Hebrew *Ha-Brachah* "Blessing," Grecised, in the same sense. That the symbolic figure embodying the idea of the Abraxas god has a reference to the sun in all its components is yet more evident, as shall be shown hereafter; similarly, the Brahmins apply their Ineffable Name *Aum* to the "fierce and all-pervading Sun"; and Macrobius devotes much curious learning to prove that all the great gods of antiquity, whatever their names and figures, were no more than various attempts at personifying the One Deity, whose residence is the sun. It must here be remembered that Basilides was by no means a *Christian heretic*, as the later Fathers found it expedient to represent him, but rather as his contemporary Clemens, relates, a philosopher devoted to the study of divine things; and thus possibly imbued with such Buddhistic notions as the intercourse between Alexandria and the cities of Guzerat (then ruled over by the Jaina kings) may have naturalized both in Egypt and in Palestine. This metropolis, as the grand emporium for foreign doctrines as well as foreign wares, supplies the reason for the frequent union of Mithras with Abraxas in the same stone, proceeding from the Alexandrian talisman-factory. A curious exemplification is a green jasper (Marlborough), bearing on one side the normal Zoroastrian device, Mithras slaughtering the Bull; on the other, the well-known Gnostic Pantheus. A truly Indian syncretism, which converts all deities from separate beings into mere deified attributes of one and the same God, and (for the initiated few, that is) reduces that seemingly unlimited polytheism into the acknowledgment of the existence of the Supreme Creator.

That model of a perfect prince, Severus Alexander, must have imbibed a strong tinge of the Gnosis (as indeed might have been expected from his birthplace and style of education), for although upon every *seventh day* he went up to worship in the Capitol, and also regularly visited the temples of the other Roman gods, he nevertheless "was intending to build a temple unto Christ, and to rank Him in the number of the gods. Which thing Hadrian also is said to have thought of, and actually to have ordered temples *without images* to be built in all the chief cities of the Empire: which same temples, because they contain no gods, are now called temples raised to Hadrian himself, although in reality he is reported to have prepared them for the purpose above-named. But he was prevented from carrying out his design by those who consulted the oracles (*sacra*), and discovered that, if it should be carried out, everybody would turn Christian, and thereby the other temples would be all deserted" (Lampridius i. 43). Indeed, there is every reason to believe that, as in the East, the worship of Serapis was at first combined with Christianity, and gradually merged into it with an entire change of name, though not of substance, carrying along with it many of its proper ideas and rites, so in the West the Mithras-worship produced a similar effect upon the character of the religion that took its place. Seel, in his admirable treatise upon Mithraicism ('Mithra,' p. 287) is of opinion that "as long as the Roman dominion lasted in Germany, we find traces there of the Mosaic law: and in the same way as there were single Jewish families, so were there single Christians existing amongst the heathen. The latter, however, for the most part, ostensibly paid worship to the Roman gods in order to escape persecution, holding secretly in their hearts the religion of Christ. It is by no means improbable that, under the permitted symbols of Mithras, they worshipped the Son of God, and the mysteries of Christianity. In this point of view, the Mithraic monuments, so frequent in Germany, are evidences to the faith of the early Christian Romans." This same supremacy of the Mithras-worship in his own times makes the grand scheme of Heliogabalus prove less insane than it strikes the modern reader at the first impression. He was intending

(according to report) to permit no other worship at Rome than that of his own god and namesake, the Emesene aerolite, apt emblem of the Sun; "bringing together in his temple the Fire of Vesta, the Palladium, the Ancilia, and all the other most venerated relics; and moreover the *religion* of the Jews and Samaritans, and the *devotion** of the Christians." (Lampridius 3). To such a heterogeneous union that numerous section of the Roman public who shared Macrobius' sentiments on the nature of all ancient gods, could have found no possible objection so far as the *principle* was concerned.

That such a relationship to Christianity was actually alleged by the partisans of Mithraicism (when in its decline) is proved by the remarkable declaration of Augustine himself (John I. Dis. 7). "I remember that the priests of the *fellow in the cap* (*illius pileati*) used at one time to say, 'Our Capped One is himself a Christian.'" In this asserted affinity probably lay the motive that induced Constantine to adopt for the commonest type of his coinage (the sole currency of the Western provinces), and retain long after his conversion, the figure of Sol himself, with the legend "To the Invincible Sun, my companion (or guardian)." A type capable of a double interpretation, meaning equally the ancient Phœbus and the new Sun of Righteousness, and thereby unobjectionable to Gentile and Christian alike of the equally divided population amongst whom it circulated. Nay more, this Emperor when avowedly Christian, selected for the grandest ornament of his new Capital, a colossal Apollo, mounted upon a lofty column, which retained its place until cast down by an earthquake in the reign of Alexius Comnenus.

Through a similar interchange, the old festival held on the 25th day of December in honour of the "Birth-day of the Invincible One," and celebrated by the Great Games of the Circus (as marked in the Kalendar "viii KAL.IAN. N. INVICTI. C. M. xxiv†) was afterwards transferred to the commemoration of the Birth of Christ, of which the real day was, as the Fathers

* This curious distinction between "religio" and "devotio," is meant to mark the difference between a national and established creed and one held by individuals, without any public sanction.

† Signifying that twenty-four consecutive races of chariots were exhibited on that occasion in the Circus Maximus.

confess, totally unknown: Chrysostom, for example, declares (Hom. xxxi.) that the Birthday of Christ had then *lately* been fixed at Rome upon that day, in order that whilst the heathen were busied with their own profane ceremonies, the Christians might perform their holy rites without molestation.

And Mithras was the more readily admitted as the type of Christ, Creator and Maintainer of the Universe, inasmuch as the Zendavesta declares him to be the First Emanation of Ormuzd, the Good Principle, and the Manifestation of Himself unto the world. Now it was from this very creed that the Jews, during their long captivity in the Persian Empire (of which when restored to Palestine they formed but a province), derived all the angelology of their religion, even to its minutest details, such as we find it flourishing in the times of the Second Kingdom. Not until then are they discovered to possess the belief in a future state; of rewards and punishments, the latter carried on in a fiery lake; the existence of a complete hierarchy of good and evil angels, taken almost verbatim from the lists given by the Zendavesta; the soul's immortality, and the Last Judgment—all of them essential parts of the Zoroastrian scheme, and recognised by Josephus as the fundamental doctrines of the Judaism of his own times.

To all these ideas Moses in the Law makes not the slightest allusion; his promises and threatenings are all of the earth, earthy; he preaches a religion of *Secularists*, and such a religion was, down to the latest days of Jerusalem, still maintained by the Sadducees. Now these Sadducees were the most ancient and respectable families of the nation, who boasted of keeping the law of Moses pure, and uncontaminated from the admixture of foreign notions imbibed by the commonalty during their long sojourn amongst the Gentiles. Nay more, there is some reason to accept Matter's etymology of the name of their opponents, the Pharisees, as actually signifying "Persians," being a term of contempt for the holders of the new-fangled doctrines picked up from their conquerors. And this etymology is a much more rational one, and more consistent with the actual elements of the word, than the common one making it to mean "Separatists" —an epithet by no means applicable to a party constituting

the immense *majority* of the race. It is only necessary now to allude to the ingenious theory of Bishop Warburton, set forth in his 'Divine Legation of Moses,' who converts the absence of all spiritualism from his teaching into the strongest argument for its being directly inspired from Heaven.

But from whatever source derived, how closely does the Zoroastrian idea of the nature and office of Mithras coincide with the definition of those of Christ as given by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that profound Jewish theologian, who styles Him the "Brightness (or *reflection*) of his glory, the express *image** of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power;" and again, "being made so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent *Name* than they," and here it may be observed that the *Reflection* of the *Invisible* Supreme in his First Emanation is a distinguishing feature in most of the Gnostic systems. Mithras used to be invoked *together* with the Sun, and thus, being confounded with that luminary, became the object of a separate worship, which ultimately superseded that of Ormuzd himself: and this was the only one propagated by the Pontic colonists and their converts amongst the nations of the West. Secondary deities often usurp the places of those of the first rank; so Vishnu and Siva have entirely eclipsed Brahma. Serapis had played the same part with the Pharaonic gods of Egypt, and yet more striking analogies from modern creeds are too obvious to require quotation. Through this relationship of ideas Mithraic symbolism found its way into early Christian art in many of its particulars. The bas-relief over the portal of the Baptistery at Parma (a work of the 12th century), has all the aspect of a Mithraic monument, and certainly its design would be very difficult to understand from a Scriptural point of view.

* Ἀπαύγασμα—χαρακτήρ, the latter word literally "impression of a seal," is the exact counterpart of the Hebrew title, "Tikkan," the Primal Emanation.

II. THE MITHRAIC SACRAMENTS.

The principal rites of the worship of Mithras bore a very curious resemblance to those subsequently established in the Catholic church; they likewise furnished a model for the initiatory ceremonies observed by the secret societies of the Middle Ages, and by their professed descendants in modern times. The Neophytes were admitted by the rite of *Baptism;* the initiated at their assemblies solemnly celebrated a species of *Eucharist:* whilst the courage and endurance of the candidate for admission into the sect were tested by *twelve* consecutive trials, called "The Tortures," undergone within a cave constructed for the purpose; all which "tortures" had to be completely passed through before participation in the Mysteries was granted to the aspirant.

The two distinguishing Rites, or "Sacraments" (to use the technical term) are thus alluded to by Justin Martyr (*Apol.* II) in the earliest description which has been left us of their character. "The Apostles in the Commentaries written by themselves, which we call *Gospels*, have delivered down to us that Jesus thus commanded them: He having taken bread, after that He had given *thanks*,* said: Do this in commemoration of me; this is my body. Also having taken a cup and returned thanks, He said: This is my blood, and delivered it unto them alone. Which things indeed the evil spirits have taught to be done, out of memory, in the Mysteries and Initiations of Mithras. For in these likewise a cup of water, and bread, are set out, with the addition of certain words, in the sacrifice or act of worship of the person about to be initiated: a thing which Ye either know by personal experience or may learn by inquiry." Again, Tertullian, writing in the following century, has in the same connection: "The Devil, whose business it is to pervert the truth, *mimicks the exact circumstances* of the Divine Sacraments, in the Mysteries of idols. He himself *baptises* some that is to say, his believers and followers; he promises forgive-

* This expression seems to prove that the notion of *blessing*, or consecrating, the elements, had not then (the second century) crept into the Christian practice.

ness of sins from the *Sacred Fount*, and thereby initiates them into the religion of Mithras: thus he *marks on the forehead* his own soldiers: there he celebrates the *oblation of bread:* he brings in the symbol of the Resurrection, and wins the crown with the sword." By the "symbol of the Resurrection" Tertullian clearly means that "simulation of death" mentioned by Lampridius (of which more hereafter), and which is typified on so many talismans by the corpse bestridden by the Solar Lion. The final ceremony he has himself explained in another passage: "Blush, my Roman fellow-soldiers, even though ye be not to be judged by Christ, but by any 'Soldier of Mithras,' who when he is undergoing initiation in the *Cave*, in the very Camp of the Powers of Darkness, when the *crown* (garland, rather) is offered to him (a sword being placed between, as though in semblance of martyrdom), and about to be set upon his head, is instructed to put forth his hand, and push the crown away, transferring it perchance, to his shoulder, saying at the same time: My crown is Mithras. And from that time forth he never wears a crown (garland), and this he has for the badge of his initiation, for he is immediately known to be a 'soldier of Mithras,' if he rejects a garland when offered to him, saying that his crown is his god. Let us therefore acknowledge the craftiness of the Devil; who copies certain things of those that be Divine, in order that he may confound and judge us by the faithfulness of his own followers." As to the ceremony here mentioned, unimportant as it may seem to the modern reader, it may be remarked that as the wearing a garland was indispensable among the ancients on all festive occasions, the refusal of one upon such occasions would be a most conspicuous mark of singularity, and of unflinching profession of faith. But every dispassionate observer will perceive that these over-zealous Fathers proceed to beg the question when they assume that the Mithraic rites were devised as *counterfeits* of the Christian Sacraments: inasmuch as the former were in existence long before the first promulgation of Christianity; unless indeed to *imitate* by anticipation be considered as merely another proof of the mischievous sagacity of its diabolical opponent. On the other hand, there is good reason to suspect that the simple

commemorative, or distinctive, ceremonies, instituted by the first founder of Christianity, were gradually invested with those mystic and supernatural virtues which later ages insisted upon as articles of faith, by the teaching of unscrupulous missionaries, anxious to outbid the attractions of long-established rites of an apparently cognate character. By this assimilation they offered to their converts through the performance of, as it were, certain magical practices, all those spiritual blessings of which the rites themselves were, at their institution, the *symbols* only, not the instruments. A very instructive illustration of such union of Mithraicism and Christianity, in the celebration of the Eucharist, is afforded by the Pistis-Sophia's description of the great one celebrated by the Saviour himself upon the shore of the Sea of Galilee, which will be found given at length in its proper place. And lastly, it deserves to be mentioned that "eating the flesh and drinking the blood" of a human sacrifice was far from being a mere figure of speech in certain of these mystic celebrations. Pliny gives high praise to Claudius for having suppressed the worship of the Druids (whom he considers as identical in their religion with the Magi), in whose rites "it was esteemed the highest act of religion to slaughter a man, and the most salutary of proceedings to eat the flesh of the same." And in this notion, which necessarily became attached by suspicion to the proceedings of all secret societies, lay most probably the root of the belief so widely diffused amongst the Roman vulgar, that the real Eucharist of the first Christians at their nocturnal meetings was the sacrifice, and the feasting upon, a new-born child, concealed within a vessel of flour, into which the catechumen was directed by his sponsors to plunge a knife.

In the particulars preserved to us of the Mithraic Sacrament, certain very curious analogies to those of the Christian rite cannot fail to arrest our attention. The "Bread therein used was a round cake," emblem of the solar disk, and called *Mizd.* In this name Seel discovers the origin of *Missa*, as designating the Bloodless Sacrifice of the Mass, assuming that this Mizd was the prototype of the Host (*hostia*), which is of precisely the same form and dimensions.

It is not out of place to notice here the various etymologies which have been proposed for the word *Missa*. The most popular one, which moreover has the sanction of Ducange, derives it from the words "Ite, missa est," with which the priest dismissed the *non-communicant* part of the congregation, before proceeding to the actual consecration of the Eucharist. The translation of the phrase by the vulgar into "Depart, it is the Missa," would certainly be obvious enough. But, according to the rule in all such cases, the *object* sacrificed gives its name to the ceremony, rather than a phrase from the ceremonial itself, and this object had from time immemorial gone by the name of *hostia*, or "victim." The early Christians were quite as partial as the Gnostics to the naturalizing of the Hebrew terms belonging to the Mosaic ordinances, and applying the same to their own practices. Thus the old Covenant went amongst them by the name of *Phase*, for example:—

> "In hoc festo novi Regis,
> Novum *Pascha* novæ legis
> Vetus *Phase* terminat."

The Rabbins have possibly preserved a tradition that explains the true origin of the wafer. Alphonsus de Spira, in his "Fortalitium Fidei" (II. 2), asserts that its circular form is a symbol of the sun, and that it is in reality offered in sacrifice, at the celebration of the Mass, to the genius of that luminary! For the Kabbalists hold that Moses and the prophets were inspired by the genius of Saturn, a good and pure spirit, whereas Jesus was by that of Mercury, a malevolent one; and the Christian religion was the work of Mercury, Jupiter and the Sun, all combining together for that purpose. There is yet another curious analogy to be noticed, when it is remembered that the Mass symbolises the *death* of its first institutor. A *round* cake (the *chupatty* of such evil notoriety at the commencement of the Sepoy Mutiny) is, amongst the Hindoos, the established offering to the Manes of their ancestors. The Christian "breaking of bread," besides symbolising the great sacrifice once offered, seems, from the account of the Manifestation at Emmaus, to have been done in some peculiar

way which should serve for a *masonic* token, or means of mutual recognition amongst the brethren.

The sacramental Cup, or *chalice*, is often represented as set upon the Mithraic altar, or rather, *table;* and a curious piece of jugglery connected with its employment (though not amongst the Mithraicists), is described by Epiphanius (Hæres. xxxiv.). The followers of Marcus, in their celebrating the Eucharist, employed *three* vases made of the clearest glass. These were filled with wine which, during the progress of the ceremony, changed into a blood-red, purple, and blue colour, respectively. "Thereupon the officiating minister, or more properly speaking, *magician*, hands one of these vessels to some lady of the congregation, and requests her to bless it. Which done, he pours this into another vase of much greater capacity, with the prayer, "May the grace of God, which is above all, inconceivable, inexplicable, fill thine inner man, and increase the knowledge of Himself within thee, sowing the grain of mustard-seed in good ground!" Whereupon the liquid in the larger vase swells and swells until it runs over the brim.

The worship of Mithras long kept its ground under the Christian emperors in the capital itself, and doubtless survived its overthrow there for many generations longer in the remote and then semi-independent provinces. At the very close of the fourth century, Jerome, writing to Læta, says, "A *few* years ago, did not your kinsman Gracchus, a name the very echo of patrician nobility, when holding the office of Prefect of the City, break down and burn the Cave of Mithras, with all the monstrous images which pervade the initiatory rites, as Corax, Niphus, the Soldier, the Lion, the Persian, Helios, and Father Bromius?"

In the imagery here alluded to, it is easy to recognise figures that perpetually occur upon the still extant representations of the Mithras worship. In *Corax*, the Raven; in *Niphus*, Cneph the serpent; the *armed man;* the *Lion* bestriding the human victim; the youth in *Persian* garb; the *Sun*, expressed either by Phœbus in his car, or by the star with eight rays; and *Bromius* "the Roarer," appropriate title of the Grecian Dionysos; who also appears as the Asiatic *Phanaces*, a youth holding a

torch in each hand, one elevated and one depressed to signify his rising and setting. Chiflet's gem (Fig. 62) may on good grounds be taken for a picture of the Mithraic ritual, and upon it all the forementioned figures and symbols are easily to be discovered. Two erect serpents form a kind of frame to the whole tableau; at the top of which are seen the heads of Sol and Luna confronted; between them stands an eagle with outspread wings; at the back of each, a raven. In the field are two naked, crowned men on horseback, trampling upon as many dead bodies; between them a kneeling figure in supplicatory attitude, over whose head are two stars. Behind each horseman stand two soldiers. In the exergue is set out a table supporting a loaf, a fawn (sacred to Bacchus), a chalice, and something indistinct, but probably meant for the *crown* Tertullian speaks of. The reverse presents a more simple design: two crested serpents (*dracones*), twined about wands, and looking into a cup; two stars over a table resting upon a larger vase; and on each side a bow, the ends of which finish in serpents' heads.

In this composition we probably see portrayed certain amongst the tests of the neophyte's courage, which, according to Suidas, were termed the "Twelve Degrees" or "Tortures." These corresponded in nature, although of vastly more severe reality, with those trials of courage to which our Masonic Lodges subject the "apprentice" who seeks admission amongst them. During the Mithraic probation, which lasted *forty* days,* the candidate was tested by the Four Elements, he lay naked a certain number of nights upon the snow, and afterwards was scourged for the space of two days. These Twelve Tortures are sculptured upon the border of the famous Mithraic tablets preserved in the Innsbruck Museum, and a brief account of their several stages will serve to elucidate much of what remains to be discussed. I. Man standing and about to plunge a dagger into the throat of a kneeling figure, who holds up his hands in supplication. (This scene appears analogous to the one in the modern ceremonial, when the candidate, ordered to remove the bandage from his eyes, beholds many swords pointed in the

* Perhaps the origin of the Lenten term of self-inflicted punishment.

most threatening manner at his naked breast.) II. Naked man lying on the earth, his head resting on his hand, in the posture of repose. (Probably the penance of the bed of snow.) III. The same figure, standing with hands uplifted in a huge crescent (perhaps an *ark*, and representing the trial by water. To this last, Plato is reported to have been subjected during his initiation in Egypt, and to have but narrowly escaped drowning). IV. The same, but now with the *pileus*, cap of liberty, upon his head, rushing boldly into a great fire (the trial by fire). V. He is now seen struggling through a deep stream, and endeavouring to grasp a rock. VI. Bull walking to the left.

On the other side come the remaining stages. VII. Four guests reclining at a horseshoe table (*sigma*), upon which is set a boar roasted whole. VIII. Youth guided up a flight of interminable steps by an aged man. IX. Youth kneeling before a man in a long robe, whose hand he grasps in prayer. X. The same figures, but their positions are interchanged. XI. Seated man, before whom kneels a naked, crowned, youth, escorted by one in a long robe. XII. Naked man holding up the hind legs of a cow, so as to receive in his face the stream still regarded by the Hindoos as the most efficient laver of regeneration, and consequently always administered to persons at their last gasp. The same sacred fluid (as I am informed by a Parsee) is used in the sacramental cups drunk by every male upon his first admission into that religion, which takes place on his completing his seventh year. Nay more, such is the belief in its cleansing virtue, that scrupulous Parsees always carry a bottle thereof in their pocket, wherewith to purify their hands after any unavoidable contact with unbelievers!

Very similar ceremonies to these were practised in the secret societies of the Middle Ages, if we choose to accept Von Hammer's interpretation of certain mysterious sculptures, still to be seen in the Templar-churches of Germany; and which he has copiously illustrated in his 'Mysterium Baphometis revelatum.' In the intaglio already described, the kneeling neophyte is encompassed by all the terrific and mysterious host of Mithras, so remorselessly destroyed by the zealous Gracchus.

And again, the corpses trampled on by the crowned horsemen clearly refer to that recorded test of the candidate's fortitude—the apparent approach of death—for Lampridius puts down amongst the other mad freaks of Commodus, that during the Mithraic ceremonies, "when a certain thing had to be done for the purpose of inspiring terror, he polluted the rites by a *real murder:*" an expression clearly showing that a scenic representation of such an act did really form a part of the proceedings. The *Raven* properly takes its place here, as being the attribute of the Solar god in the Hellenic creed, on which account it is often depicted standing upon Apollo's lyre.

Many other gems express the spiritual benefits conferred by the Mithraic initiation upon believers. A frequent device of the kind, is a man, with hands bound behind his back, seated at the foot of a pillar supporting a gryphon with paw on wheel, that special emblem of the solar god; often accompanied with the legend ΔΙΚΑΙΩΣ, "I have deserved it." Another (Blacas) displays an unusual richness of symbolism: the same gryphon's tail ends in a scorpion, whilst the wheel squeezes out of its chrysalis a tiny human soul that stretches forth its hands in jubilation; in front stands Thoth's ibis, holding in its beak the balance, perhaps the horoscope of the patient. This talisman too, unites the Egyptian with the Magian creed, for the benefit of the carrier; for the reverse displays Isis, but in the character of Hygieia, standing upon her crocodile; the field being occupied by strangely complicated monograms, of sense intelligible to the initiated alone, and doubtless communicated to the recipient of the talisman, who found in them "a New Name written, that no man knoweth, save he that receiveth the same." But both doctrines and ceremonial of this religion are best understood through the examination of extant representations displaying them either directly or allegorically; which in their turn are illustrated by the practice of the faithful few who still keep alive the Sacred Fire, namely the Parsees of Guzerat. The series therefore will be most fittingly opened by the following curious description of a cave of Mithras, as discovered in its original and unprofaned condition, written by that eminent antiquary, Flaminius Vacca. (No. 117.)

III. A ROMAN MITHRAS IN HIS CAVE.

"I remember there was found in the vineyard of Sig. Orazio Muti (where the treasure was discovered), opposite S. Vitale, an idol in marble about 5 palms high ($3\frac{3}{4}$ ft.), standing erect upon a pedestal in an empty chamber, which had the door walled up. This idol had the head of a lion, but the body that of a man. Under the feet was a globe, whence sprung a serpent which encompassed all the idol, and its head entered into the lion's mouth. He had his hands crossed upon the breast, with a key in each; four wings fastened upon the shoulders, two pointing upwards, two downwards. I do not consider it a very antique work, being done in a rude manner, or else indeed it was so ancient that at the time when it was made the good style was not yet known. Sig. Orazio, however, told me that a theologian, a Jesuit Father, explained its meaning by saying it signified the Devil, who, in the times of heathenism, ruled over the world: hence the *globe* under his feet, the *serpent* which begirt his body and entered into his mouth, signified his foretelling the future with ambiguous responses; the *keys* in his hands, his sovereignty over the world; the *lion's head*, his being the ruler of all beasts; the *wings*, his presence everywhere. Such was the interpretation given by the Father aforesaid. I have done everything to see the idol, but Sig. Orazio being now dead, his heirs do not know what has become of it. It is not, however, unlikely that by the advice of the same theologian, Sig. Orazio may have sent it to some *limekiln to cure its dampness*, for it had been buried many and many a year." Thus was this most interesting monument destroyed through the conceited ignorance of a wretched ecclesiastic, himself more truly a worshipper of the Evil Principle, than was the ancient votary of the beneficent Lord of Light who carved that wondrous image. Vacca adds, "I remember, there was found in the same place, after the above-mentioned idol, another, only in bas-relief, also having a lion's head, but the rest of the body human: with the arms extended, in each hand a torch; with two wings pointing upwards, two downwards, from between which issued a serpent.

At his right stood an altar with fire; from the idol's mouth proceeded a ribbon or scroll extending over the fire."

This *lion*-headed deity can be no other than Jerome's "Pater Bromius," a Grecian title of Bacchus; and he, we are told, distinguished himself under that disguise in the famous war of the giants—

> "Tu cum Parentis regna per arduum
> Cohors Gigantum scanderet impia,
> Rhætum retorsisti *leonis*
> Unguibus horribilique mala."
> (Horace, Od. II. xix. 21–24.)

And, tracing back this composite figure to the real source of such iconology, it is found to be the very one under which "Nri-singha-avatar" is depicted. It was assumed by the deity in order to destroy the tyrant Hiransyakaçipu, who had obtained the gift of invulnerability against all *known* beasts, either by day or night.

A Mithraic cave, with the contiguous buildings, was discovered at Spoleto in 1878. In the end wall were the usual three niches for the god and his torch-bearers. In front of them an altar inscribed "Soli invicto Mithræ sacrum." Close to the altar, a tall phallic stone, perforated with a square hole near the top—perhaps the "stone symbolizing the Birth of Mithras" mentioned by Firmicus. The cave, with the ground plan of the whole edifice is given in the 'Archæologia,' vol. 47, p. 205.

IV. MITHRAIC TALISMANS.

Mithraic gems are, for the most part, earlier in date than those emanating from the Gnosticism of Alexandria, with whose doctrines they had no connection whatever in their first origin. Little difficulty will be found on inspection in separating the two classes, the former being pointed out by the superiority of their style, and yet more so by the absence of the Egyptian symbols, and long Coptic legends that generally accompany the latter. Indeed many of them belong to the best period of Roman art—the age of Hadrian; and it is easy to perceive how the worship of Apollo gradually merged into that of his more

spiritual oriental representative, in the times when religious ideas of Indian origin began to get the upper hand throughout the Roman world—a religion essentially speculative, and dealing with matters pertaining to another life and the Invisible, utterly different in nature from the old Grecian creed, so materialistic, so active, so entirely busying itself with the Present and the Visible.

In accordance with the rule that prescribed the proper *material* for talismans, the Jasper (Pliny's *Molochites*), green, mottled, or yellow, is almost exclusively employed for intagli embodying Mithraic ideas, and which take the place of Phœbus and his attributes amongst the glyptic remains of the second and third centuries. To judge from their fine execution, certain examples of the class may even date from the age of the first Cæsars, and thus form as it were the advanced guard of that countless host of regular Gnostic works, amidst whose terrific barbarism ancient art ultimately expires. In their beginning these Mithraic works were the fruit of the modified Zoroastrian doctrines so widely disseminated over the Empire after the conquest of Pontus—doctrines whose grand feature was the exclusive worship of the Solar god, as the fountain of all life—a notion philosophically true, if indeed the vital principle be, as some scientists assert, nothing more than electricity. As will be shown hereafter ("Serapis"), the later Platonists, like Macrobius, laboured hard to demonstrate that the multitudinous divinities of the old faiths, wheresoever established, were no other than various epithets and expressions for the same god in his different phases. The aim of all the school was to accommodate the old faith to the influence of the Buddhistic theosophy, the very essence of which was that the innumerable gods of the Hindoo mythology were but *names* for the *Energies* of the First Triad in its successive *Avatars*, or manifestations unto man.

To come now to the actual types setting forth these ideas; prominent amongst them is the figure of the *Lion* (he being in astrological parlance the "House of the Sun"), usually surrounded with stars, and carrying in his jaws a bull's head, emblem of earth subjected to his power. Sometimes he tramples on the serpent, which in this connection no longer typifies wisdom,

but the Principle of Evil. For in all religions emanating from the East, where deadly poisonousness is the most conspicuous character of the snake-tribe, the reptile has been adopted as the most speaking type of the *Destroyer*. In the West, on the other hand, where the same species is for the most part innocuous, and a mere object of wonder, it has always symbolized wisdom, and likewise eternity, from the popular belief in the yearly removal of its youth through casting the slough; on this account the serpent was made the companion of Apollo and Aesculapius; and furthermore plays so important a part in Scandinavian mythology, holding the whole universe together in its perpetual embrace.

Mithras himself often makes his appearance, figured as a youthful Persian, plunging the national weapon, "Medus acinaces," into the throat of a prostrate bull (which expresses the same doctrine as the type last mentioned), whilst overhead are the sun and moon, the group standing in the centre of the Zodiac. But the completest assembly of Mithraic figures and symbols that has come under my notice, is the intaglio published by Caylus ('Recueil d'Antiquités,' vi. pl. 84). It is engraved upon a very fine agate, $2 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in measurement. In the centre is the usual type of Mithras slaughtering the Bull, the tail of which terminates in three wheat-ears, and between the hind legs hangs a huge scorpion; below is the Lion strangling the Serpent—emblem of darkness and of death. On each side stands a fir-tree, admitted into this system because its spiry form imitates a flame, for which same reason its cone was taken for the symbol of the element fire, and therefore borne in the hands of deities in the most ancient Syrian sculptures. Against these fir-trees are affixed torches, one pointing upwards, the other downwards, which clearly stand for the rising and setting of the Sun. At the side of one is a scorpion, of the other, a bull's head. Above each tree again is a torch, each pointing in an opposite direction. The principal group is flanked by Phœbus in his four-horse, Luna in her two-horse car. Above the whole stand two winged figures entwined with serpents and leaning upon long sceptres, between whom rise up three flames, besides four more at the side of the right-hand

figure, making up the mystic number seven—perhaps representing the seven Amshaspands or Archangels. A naked female, surrounded with stars, kneels before the angel on the left—doubtless the soul for whose benefit the talisman was composed—soliciting his patronage.

Could this elaborate composition be interpreted, it would certainly be found to contain a summary of the Mithraic creed as it was received by the nations of the West. As it is, however, some portions of the tableau are explained by certain legends to be found in the Parsee sacred books; whilst others derive light from comparison with the larger monuments of the same worship. Thus, the termination of the bull's tail in ears of wheat allude to the fifty life-giving plants which sprang from the tail of the Primæval *Bull* (or *Life*, the same word in Zend) after he had been slain by Ahriman. Of the same animal the seed was carried up by the Izeds (genii) to the Moon, where, purified in her beams, it was moulded by Ormuzd into a new pair, the parents of all that exists in earth, air and water. The scorpion is appended to the part of the body, properly under the influence of the sign so called, for as Manilius teaches, "The fiery scorpion in the *groin* delights." In this particular situation it expresses Autumn, as the serpent underneath does Winter; and with good reason takes the place of the bull's genitals, for, as the same poet sings (iv. 217.)

> "With fiery tail when Scorpio threatens war,
> As through the stars he drives the solar car,
> He searches earth with penetrating rays
> And the mixed seed deep in her furrows lays."

The torches raised and lowered signify the East and West. In the circular altar of the Villa Borghese (Winckelmann Mon. Ined. No. 21) the bust of Luna appears resting on a crescent over an aged head in front face with crabs' claws springing out of his forehead—a speaking type of Oceanus. The bust of the *rising* sun, with his customary badge, the eight-rayed star, in point, rests upon an erect flambeau, whilst that of the *setting* luminary looking downwards, is placed upon another lowered towards earth. Again, the serpent winding *four* times about the figures may signify the sun's annual revolution; an explanation

rendered the more plausible by the torso of Mithras at Arles, in which the Zodiacal Signs occupy the intervals between the coils of the same serpent. The lion and raven stand for the attendant priests; for in these mysteries the higher officials were denominated *Lions*, the lower *Ravens*: whence the rites themselves got the name of "Leontica," and "Coracica."

The fires, the planets and the genii presiding over them are in number *seven*—a numeral the most sacred of all amongst the Persians. But of these seven Fires, *three* are ever depicted in a special manner as those most worthy to be held in reverence. These three are the "Fire of the Stars," that is, of the planet Venus, named *Anahid;* the "Fire of the Sun," or the Fire *Mihr;* and the "Fire of Lightning," or the Fire *Bersiov*, that is, the planet Jupiter. The *Mihr* is the winged orb, so common in all Assyrian sculpture—an emblem which serves to explain the Prophet's simile, "the *Sun* of Righteousness with healing in his *wings*."

The worship of the Fire Gushtasp (or that of Anahid) figures on the Zend sculptures as a very ancient worship, and also in the "Shah Nameh;" just as that of the goddess Anaitis does in many Greek authors from Herodotus downwards. This historian observes (I. 131) that *at first* the Persians worshipped only the sun, moon, and elements, until they learnt from the Assyrians the worship of Venus Urania, whom they called *Mitra*, the same being the Mylitta of the Babylonians, the Alata or Alilat of the Arabians. Now Mitra (feminine of Mithras) and Anahid, are one and the same goddess, that is to say, the Morning Star, a female Genius, presiding over love, giving light, and directing the harmonious movement of the other planets by the sound of her lyre, the strings whereof are the solar rays—"Apollo's lyre strung with his golden hair" (Creuzer, Kal. de l'Antiq. ii. 731). In this doctrine we discover the reason for the *separation* of the Fires upon Caylus' gem into *two* groups; the principal group consisting of the three most anciently adored; the subsidiary one of the remaining four.

Other Mithraic symbols are of a very speaking character, and almost explain their own meaning at first sight. Thus Mithras *piercing* the bull's throat with his dagger signifies the *penetration*

of the solar ray into the bosom of the earth, by whose action all Nature is nourished; as is further expressed by the *Dog's* licking up the blood that pours from the wound. The sign Capricorn frequently introduced into the same group, declares the necessity of *moisture* to co-operate with the Sun's influence in bringing about the germination of the seed sown; whilst the *scorpion*, in the significant position above noticed, expresses the generative *heat*. The union of two diverse religions, already mentioned, is curiously exemplified by those stones that show the Mithraic group surrounded by sets of the sacred animals of *Egypt*, arranged by threes—crocodiles, goats, calves, vultures, hawks, ibises—standing around in attitudes of adoration, and gazing upon the great work of their supreme lord, Mithras (see page 41, fig. 2).

Mithraic bas-beliefs cut upon the smoothed faces of rocks, or upon tablets of stone, still abound throughout the former western provinces of the Roman Empire; many exist in Germany; still more in France; others in this island, along the line of the Picts' Wall, and a remarkably fine example at York, the station of the Sixth Legion. The famous "Arthur's Oon" (destroyed in the last century) upon the Carron, a hemispherical vaulted building of immense blocks of stone, was unmistakably a *Specus Mithraicum*—the same in design as Chosroes' magnificent Fire temple at Gazaca. Inasmuch as the sun-god was the chief deity* of the Druids, it is easy to imagine what ready acceptance the worship of his more refined Persian equivalent would find amongst the Celtic Aborigines, when once introduced by the Roman troops and colonists, many of whom were Orientals. To the last circumstance a curious testimony is incidentally borne by Lampridius, when he remarks that the entire military force employed by Maximinus in his great in-

* As "Belenus" he continued to the last the patron-god of Aquileia, that Gallic metropolis of Cisalpine Gaul, and to his power was ascribed the death of Maximin when besieging that city. The acclamations of the senate on the receipt of the news of their deliverance from the tyrant, prove that Belenus was held to be another name for Apollo. A *shoe* of the giant emperor, a convincing testimony, literally an "ex pede Herculem," to his incredible stature, was yet to be seen in the days of Lampridius, nailed to a tree in the *sacred grove* at the place of his fall.

vasion of Germany, was the same that had been raised by Severus Alexander, and which had accompanied him to the scene of his murder, "either the North of Gaul or *Britain*," which same army the historian describes as "potentissimus quidem per *Armenios* et *Osrhoenos*, et *Parthos*, et omnis generis hominum." For this sagacious emperor had appointed to subordinate commands in his own army all the prisoners of royal or noble birth whom he had taken in his preceding Persian campaign.

Although the modern Parsees, like their Achæmenian ancestry in the days of Herodotus, abominate idols and all visible representations of things divine, yet do they still piously cherish the ideas embodied on the sculptures just passed under review. Amongst these, most conspicuous is their veneration for the *Dog* which they yet esteem the most holy of animals. Tavernier (I. 493) was on this account greatly scandalised by the Guebres of Surat; "they have another strange custom—when a person is on the point of death, to take a little dog, and place it upon his breast. When they perceive that he is at his last gasp, they apply the dog's muzzle to the dying man's mouth, and make it bark twice when in this position, as if they meant to make the person's soul enter into the dog,* which they pretend will deliver it unto the angel appointed to receive the same. Moreover, if a dog happens to die, they carry it out of the town, and pray to God in behalf of that piece of carrion, as though the brute's soul could derive any advantage from their prayers after its death." Following up this analogy, the sculptured dog licking up the bull's blood may actually be intended for such a vehicle of departing life. In these times the Parsees expose their dead, upon gratings laid on the summit of the "Tower of silence," to be consumed by the birds alone; but under the Sassanian monarchy it was the inviolable rule to lay out all corpses in the open fields to be devoured by the dogs. This was no more than carrying out to the full a very ancient principle of the Zoroastrian religion. Herodotus (I. 140) states from his own knowledge that the corpse of a Magus was not allowed to be buried before it had been *attacked* by a bird or

* My Parsee informant assures me this ceremony is now modified into the merely bringing a dog into the dying man's chamber.

dog; adding that the same was *reported* of the other Persians. The Magi regarded the killing of a dog equally criminal with that of a human being This primitive style of obsequies the Sassanians strove hard to enforce upon all nations subjected to their sway, viewing as a great sacrilege the placing of dead bodies in the bosom of the earth; a still greater, the consuming them by the sacred element, *Fire.* This practice above all others scandalised the narrow-minded Byzantines; the historian Agathias expressing his horror at the casting the dead to the dogs, whatever their rank or dignity in life; as in the case of the great Satrap Mermeroes, whom he *saw* thus exposed naked in the fields to be so devoured. When the last seven sages of Greece, expelled from their professional chairs at Athens by the stupid bigotry of Justinian, sought refuge in the ostentatious hospitality of Nushirwan the Just, even they (despite their philosophy) found themselves obliged, by their disgust at the sight of this practice,* to return home with sad loss of dignity, and submit to the spirit of the times. If the dogs refused to touch the carcase, this was looked on by the friends of the deceased as the very worst of indications as to the ultimate destination of his soul. The Parsees, who, with more decency, constitute the raven† (or equally sacred creature) sexton and sepulchre in one, derive a similar augury from observing which eye is first attacked by the bird, the preference for the right one being the token of salvation; for the left, of the reverse.

A very curious portion of the initiatory ceremony in the

* To which they would have been forced to conform had they continued under the protection of the Sassanian king.

† The same practice prevails in Thibet with the motive thus assigned. "Several bodies exposed on the banks of the stream were being devoured by crows and buzzards, which soon leave nothing but the skeletons, which are washed away by the summer rise of the stream. The Tibetians believe that as each buzzard, gorged with its foul repast, soars into the heavens, a portion of the spirit of the deceased is taken up into heaven. In the case of rich people Lamas are employed to divide the body into small pieces and carry it up to the top of a hill, where the vulture and buzzard soon dispose of it. Interment of the dead is also practised, but only among the poorer people, who cannot afford to pay Lamas to perform the ceremony of exposing the body."—Cooper's 'Travels of a Pioneer of Commerce,' p. 270.

ancient Mysteries was the giving of the "Mark of Mithras." After successfully undergoing each stage of the ordeal, the accepted candidate was *marked* in a certain indelible manner, but the exact nature of this marking cannot now be ascertained The expressions used by St. Augustine (in Johan. i. dis. 7) lead us to conclude two things: firstly, that the *engraved stones*, the object of our consideration, were given to the candidate at the end of his probation, for a token of admission into the fraternity, and for a medium of recognition between members: and secondly, that every one, upon admission, was stamped with a *secret Mark*, indelibly imprinted in his flesh. "Something of the sort has been copied by a certain Spirit, in that he will have his *own image* to be purchased with *blood*, forasmuch as he was aware that mankind were some day or another to be redeemed by the shedding of blood." This last expression shows that this Mark was not *burnt in*, but *incised* or tattooed; and the same conclusion may be deduced from St. John's using the term χάραγμα, *engraving*, not στίγμη, *branding*, for that badge of servitude which all the subjects of the Second Beast, "having horns like a lamb's, and speaking like a dragon," were forced to receive, either *in* their right hands (i.e., upon the palm) or upon their foreheads, and he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a Mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: "and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the Mark, or the Name of the Beast, or the Number of his Name" (Rev. xiii. 17). These words contain a compendious account of the different kinds of "Stigmata" then in use to distinguish those devoting themselves to any particular deity. The *Mark* was the figure of the special symbol or attribute of that deity (exactly answering to the caste-marks of the modern Hindoos): the *Name* was his own, written at full length in some sacred language: the *Number* was the more recondite way of expressing that name, either by a single numeral in the primitive Chaldæan fashion, or by other letters taken numerically, and yielding the same sum. The author of the Apocalypse very probably had the Mithraicists in view when penning this allegory; yet we may be certain that the members of a *secret* society did not receive the mark of member-

ship upon any *conspicuous* part of their persons. The same necessity meets us here, as in every other branch of this inquiry, for placing the origin of all such sectarian bodily Marks in India—the true fountainhead, directly or indirectly, of so many Gnostic practices. *There*, the votaries of the several deities are still distinguished, each by the proper symbol of his patron-god impressed upon his *forehead*, but by a milder process than of old, being traced, not in his own blood, but with the ashes of cow-dung, the powder of sandal-wood, or coloured-earths, daily renewed. Inasmuch as amongst them the symbol of Fire (Bramah) is an equilateral Triangle, with the apex pointing upwards, it may be *conjectured* that the Mithraic χάραγμα was the same simple figure, by which indeed Horapollo informs us the Egyptians symbolised the Moon, and Plutarch that Pythagoras expressed the goddess Athene.* Clarkson, however, asserts positively that the Mark of Mithras was the "Tau mysticum," but whence he derived this knowledge I have never been able to ascertain.†

The *Seven Stars*, so conspicuous upon these talismans, doubtless stand for something higher than the mere planets; in all likelihood they denote the Seven Amshaspands, the First Order of Angels in the Zoroastrian hierarchy; and who became the "Seven Spirits of God" to the later Jews, and thence by gradual transition gave the epithet "Septiformis munere" to the Spiritus Sanctus of Christianity. Of these Amshaspands the names and offices are: Ormuzd, source of life and creation; Bahman, king of the world; Ardibehest, giver of fire; Shahrivar, of the metals; Çpandarmat (the Gnostic Sophia), queen of the earth; Khordad, presiding over time and the seasons; Amerdad, over trees and plants. Of these the highest in place are (after Ormuzd) the four named next in gradation. Below this order stand the Izeds, twenty-seven in number, ruled over by Mithras; they govern the heavenly bodies and the elements.

* Herself the lunar deity, according to an old tradition preserved by Aristotle.

† There is very good reason to discover a Mithraic mark in the "Phanaces" or, Sun between two Crescents, the regular badge of the kings of Pontus, and as such put upon the states of Athens bearing the names of Mithridates and Aristion. (In the Duc de Luynes Collection.)

Against each Amshaspand and Ized is arrayed a corresponding Angel of Darkness, to thwart all his operations, namely, the Seven Arch-Devs, and the Twenty-Seven Devs.

V. GNOSTIC SACRAMENTS AND INITIATIONS AS CONNECTED WITH THE MITHRAIC.

In my account of Mithraicism notice has been taken of the very prominent part that sacraments for the remission of sin play in the ceremonial of that religion; the following extracts from the grand Gnostic text-book will serve to show how the same notions (and probably, forms) were transferred to the service of Gnosticism.

Baptism, Remitting Sins.—(Pistis-Sophia) (298). Then came forth Mary and said: Lord, under what form do *Baptisms* remit sins? I have heard thee saying that the Ministers of Contentions (ἐριδαῖοι)* follow after the soul, bearing witness against it of all the sins that it hath committed, so that they may convict it in the judgments. Now, therefore, Lord, do the mysteries of Baptism blot out the sins that be in the hands of the Receivers of Contention, so that they shall utterly forget the same? Now, therefore, Lord, tell us in what form they remit sins; for we desire to know them thoroughly. Then the Saviour answered and said: Thou hast well spoken: of truth those Ministers are they that testify against all sins, for they abide constantly in the places of judgment, laying hold upon the souls, convicting all the souls of sinners who have not received the mystery, and they keep them fast in chaos tormenting them. But these contentious ones cannot pass over chaos so as to enter into the courses that be above chaos; in order to convict the souls therefore receiving the mysteries, it is not lawful for them to force so as to drag them down into chaos, where the Contentious Receivers may convict them. But the souls of such as have not received the mysteries, these do they desire and hail into chaos: whereas the souls that have received

* The Cabiri, "punishers," of the ancient mythology, performing their former duties under the new dispensation.

the mysteries, they have no means of convicting, seeing that they cannot get out of their own place; and even if they did come forth, they could not stop those souls, neither shut them up in their chaos. Hearken, therefore, I will declare to you in truth in what form the mystery of Baptism remitteth sins. If the souls when yet living in the world have been sinful, the Contentious Receivers verily do come, that they may bear witness of all the sins they have committed, but they can by no means come forth out of the regions of chaos, so as to convict the soul in the places of judgment that be beyond chaos. But the counterfeit of the spirit* testifies against all the sins of the soul, in order to convict it in the places of judgment that be beyond chaos; not only doth it testify, but also sets a *seal* upon all the sins of the soul, so as to print them firmly upon the soul, that all the Rulers of the judgment place of the sinners may know that it is the soul of a sinner, and likewise know the *number* of sins which it hath committed from the seals that the counterfeit of the spirit hath imprinted upon it, so that they may punish the soul according to the number of its sins: this is the manner in which they treat the soul of a sinner. (300). Now therefore if any one hath received the mysteries of Baptism, *those mysteries become a great fire*,† exceeding strong, and wise, so as to burn up all the sins: and the Fire entereth into the soul secretly, so that it may consume within it all the sins which the counterfeit of the spirit hath printed there. Likewise it entereth into the body secretly, that it may pursue all its pursuers, and divide them into parts—for it pursueth within the body, the counterfeit of the spirit, and Fate—so that it may divide them apart from the Power and the Soul, and place them in one part of the body—so that the fire separates the counterfeit of the spirit, Fate, and the Body into one portion, and the Soul and the Power‡ into another portion. The mystery of Baptism remaineth in the middle of them, so that it may perpetually separate them, so that it may purge and cleanse them in order

* Ἀντιμῖμον Πνεύματος, one of the four component parts of the soul; equivalent apparently to our "Conscience."

† A clear allusion to the Mithraic "torture of the fire."

‡ The particle of the Godhead mixed up in the quadruple composi- of the Inner Man.

that they may not be polluted by *Matter*. Now therefore, Mary, this is the manner whereby the mystery of Baptism remitteth sins and all transgressions.

(301) And when the Saviour had thus spoken, he said to his disciples: Do ye understand in what manner I speak with you? Then came forth Mary, saying: Of a truth, Lord, I perceive in reality all the things that thou hast said. Touching this matter of the Remission of Sins, thou speaketh aforetime to us in a parable, saying: I am come to bring *fire* upon the earth; nay, more, let it burn as much as I please. And, again thou hast set it forth openly, saying: I have a baptism wherewith I will baptise and how shall I endure until it be accomplished? Ye think that I am come to bring peace upon the earth? By no means so, but dissension, which I am come to bring. For from this time forth there shall be five in one house; three shall be divided against two, and two against three. This, Lord, is the word that thou speakest openly. But concerning the word that thou spakest: I am come to bring fire upon the earth, and let it burn so much as I please: in this thou hast spoken of the mystery of Baptism in the world, and let it burn as much as thou pleasest for to consume all the sins of the soul, that it may purge them away. And again thou hast shewn the same forth openly, saying: I have a baptism wherewith I will baptise, and how shall I endure until it be accomplished? The which is this; Thou wilt not tarry in the world until the baptisms be accomplished to purify all the perfect souls. And again what thou spakest unto us aforetime: "Do ye suppose I am come to bring peace upon earth," &c. (302). This signifieth the mystery of Baptism which thou hast brought into the world, because it hath brought about dissension in the body of the world, because it hath divided the Counterfeit of the spirit, the Body, and the Fate thereof, into one party, and the Soul and the Power into the other party. The same is, "There shall be three against two, and two against three." And when Mary had spoken these things the Saviour said: Well done, thou Spiritual One in the pure light, this is the interpretation of my saying.

Then Mary went on and said: Bear with me, Lord, whilst I yet inquire of thee. Lo! we know now fully after what form

Baptism remitteth sin. Now therefore declare unto us the mystery of the Three Courts, and the mystery of the First Mystery, and likewise the mystery of the Ineffable One; in what form do these also remit sin? Do they remit sin in the *form of baptism* or not? (303) The Saviour answered again: By no means; but all the mysteries of the Three Courts remit in the soul, and in all the regions of the Rulers, all the sins that the soul hath committed even from the beginning. They remit also the sins that the soul shall have committed afterwards up to the time that each one of the mysteries taketh unto itself, the time whereof I will declare unto you hereafter. Moreover the mystery of the First Mystery, and the mystery of the Ineffable One, remit unto the soul in all the regions of the Rulers all the sins and transgressions that it hath committed. And not only do they remit, but they do not *impute sin** to the soul, from henceforth for ever by reason of the free-grace of the mystery and the exceeding glory of the same. Then said the Saviour: Do ye understand all that I have said unto you? Then Mary answered: Lord, I have caught up all the words thou hast spoken. Now therefore as to the saying that all the mysteries of the Three Courts remit sins, and blot out iniquities. Concerning this same matter hath David the prophet spoken, saying: "Blessed are they whose sins they have remitted, and whose iniquities they have covered," and as to thy saying that the mystery of the First Mystery, and the mystery of the Ineffable One, do not only remit all sin unto the soul for ever, but also do not suffer sin to be *imputed* unto the same for ever and ever, by reason of the free-gift of the great mystery, and the exceeding glory thereof; concerning this same matter David the prophet foretold, saying: "Blessed are they unto whom the Lord will not impute sin," which signifieth they will not impute sin from henceforth unto those that receive the mystery of the First Mystery and the mystery of the Ineffable One. Then answered the Saviour: Well done, thou Spiritual One, this is the interpretation of my word.

(305) Then Mary continued, saying: Lord, if a man shall

* This is the doctrine that "knowledge" renders all actions free from infulness—as held by the Simonians.

have received the mystery in the mystery of the First Mystery, and afterwards shall turn back and sin, and again shall repent and pray in his own mystery, shall his sin be remitted to him or not? Then answered the Saviour: Whosoever after receiving the mystery shall again sin twelve times, and again repent twelve times, and then shall pray in his own mystery, his sin shall be remitted unto him. But and if, after these twelve times, he shall turn again and transgress, then of a truth his sin shall never more be remitted, so that he may turn again unto his own mystery whatsoever it be. For such an one there is no repentance, unless indeed he hath received the mystery of the Ineffable One that remitteth all sins, and shall remit them at every time.

Then said Mary: Lord, those who have received the mystery of the First Mystery, and then have turned back and sinned, if such without having repented shall depart out of the body, shall they inherit the kingdom or not, forasmuch as they have received the free gift of that mystery? (306) The Saviour answered: Of such the judgment shall be the most merciful amongst all the judgments, for their dwelling is in the Middle Gate* of the Dragon of Outer Darkness, and at the end† of all those that be in torment; because such an one hath received the free gift of the mystery, and hath not remained steadfast therein. Then said Mary: Such as have received the mystery of the Ineffable One and then shall turn back and sin, but afterwards shall repent in their lifetime, how many times shall their sin be remitted unto *them?* Then answered the Saviour: To such an one, not only if he turn back and sin once, and then repent, shall his sin be remitted, but even if he doth so continually, so long as he shall repent whilst yet alive, not being in hypocrisy, and shall pray according to his own mystery, because those mysteries are merciful and remit sin at every time (307). Then asked Mary: But if such an one shall depart out of the body before he hath repented, what then shall happen unto him? (307) Then answered the Saviour: Of such an one the judgment shall be worse than of any other, and

* This term is borrowed from the ancient Gates of the Amenti.

† The lost place, answering to the Limbo of the mediæval Hell.

exceeding great; for even if those souls be *new ones*,* they shall not return unto the changes of the earthly bodies, neither shall they do any work, but they shall be cast out into the uttermost parts of the Outer Darkness, and shall be consumed so that they shall not exist for ever and ever.

(308) To this declaration Mary refers the saying: "Salt is good, but if the salt hath lost its savour," &c.

The following extracts, from the same high authority, will much elucidate the *pass-words* communicated to the dying believer, which form so important a feature of the Gnostic system.

Benefits of Initiation.—I will declare unto you that mystery, which is this: Whosoever shall have received that *One Word*, when he shall depart out of the body of the Matter of the Rulers, there shall come the Contentious Receivers to loosen him out of that body, which same Receivers loosen every one departing out of the body. And when they shall have loosened the soul that hath received that mystery which I have declared unto you, in that very moment wherein he is set loose, he becometh a great *flood of light* in the midst of them. And the Receivers shall fear the light of that soul, and shall tremble, and shall cease through their fear of the great light which they behold. And that soul shall fly up aloft, and the Receivers shall not lay hold upon him, neither shall they discern by what way he is gone, inasmuch as he is become a great *Ray of Light*, and flieth up aloft, neither is there any Power that can overtake him, nor ever come nigh unto him at all (228). But he passes through all the regions of the Rulers, and also the regions of the offspring of the Light, neither doth he give-in a declaration in any region, nor yet a defence of himself,† nor yet the pass-word (or symbol). Neither can any Power of them all draw near him, but all the regions of the Rulers and of the offspring of the Light shall

* That is, have occupied the body for the first time; not souls that after punishment for their sins in this life, have been placed again in bodies to undergo a second probation upon earth.

† All this is borrowed from the Egyptian "Ritual of the Dead," concerning the soul's passage on its way to the palace of Osiris Socharis, "the Occidental," through the One-and-twenty *Gates*, each guarded by its own Genius, and each requiring a separate address.

sing hymns, each one in his own place, fearing the flood of light that clotheth that soul, until he shall come into the place of the heirs of the mystery that he hath received, and become conjoined with the members of the same. Verily, I say unto you, he shall be in all the regions in the time that a man can shoot an arrow. Again I say unto you, whosoever shall receive that mystery and make himself perfect in all the types and figures thereof, that man is in the world, but he is more excellent than the angels, and shall be before them all; he is a man in the world, but he is better than the archangels and shall be before them all (229); he is higher than all the tyrants, and all the lords, and all the gods, and all the luminaries, and all the pure ones, and all the triple powers, and all the Primal Fathers, and all the Unseen Ones; he is a man in the world, but he is more excellent than the great unseen Primal Father, and shall be more exalted than he, and above all those pertaining to the Middle-space, and above all the emanations of the Treasury of Light, and above all the confusion,* and above every region of the Treasure of Light; he is a man in the world, but he shall reign with me (230) in my kingdom; he is a man in the world, but he shall be a king in the Light; he is a man in the world, but he is not of the world; and verily I say unto you, that man is *I*, and I am *that man;* and in the dissolution of the world, when the universe shall be raised up, and all the number of perfect souls shall be raised up, and I am made king over all the offspring of the Light, and when I am made king over the seven AMHN,† and the Five Trees, and the Three AMHN, and the Nine Keepers; and when I am king over the Boy of the boy which be the Twin Saviours, and over the Twelve Saviours, and over all the number of perfect souls which have received the mystery of Light, then whosoever shall have received the mystery of the Ineffable One, they shall be joint kings with me and shall sit upon my right hand and upon my left hand in my kingdom. Verily I say unto you, those men are I, and I am

* The Creation of the Demiurgus, in which the Particle of the Godhead is *mixed up* and lost in the heap of Matter.

† Title probably borrowed from the former *Amenti*, the four sons of Osiris, and keepers of Elysium.

those men. For this cause have I said to you formerly, ye shall sit upon your thrones on my right hand and on my left in my kingdom, and ye shall reign together with me (231). Therefore I did not refrain, neither was I abashed to call you my brethren and my fellows, inasmuch as ye shall be joint kings with me in my kingdom. These things therefore I said unto you, knowing that I was about to give unto you the mystery of the Ineffable One, because that mystery is I, and I am that mystery. Now therefore not only ye shall reign with me, but also whatsoever men shall have received that mystery they shall be joint kings with me in my kingdom; and I am they, and they are I. But my throne shall be more exalted than theirs; and inasmuch as ye shall receive sorrows in this world beyond all other men whilst ye are preaching the words that I declare unto you, therefore your thrones shall be next to my throne in my kingdom. For this cause I said of old time, in the place where I shall be, my twelve ministers shall be also; but Mary Magdalene, and John the Virgin, shall be the most excellent amongst my disciples. And all men that shall have received the mystery of the Ineffable One shall be upon my right hand and upon my left, for I am they and they are I, and they shall be equal with you in every thing; but your thrones shall be more exalted than theirs, and my throne shall be more exalted than yours (232). And all men that shall find out the *Word* of the Ineffable One, verily I say unto you all the men that shall know that *Word*, the same shall understand also the knowledge of all the words that I have spoken unto you, both in their depth and in their height, in their length and in their breadth. And what things I have not told you those I will tell you in their place and in their order in the emanation of the universe. Verily I say unto you, they shall know how the world is established, and after what form those that pertain unto the height (highest place) be made, and for what end the universe was created.

And when the Saviour had said these things, Mary Magdalene came forward and said: Lord, be not wroth with me if I seek out everything with diligence. Whether is the Word of the mystery of the Ineffable One, one thing, and the Word of

the Knowledge of All, another? Then the Saviour answered, and said: The Word of the mystery of the Ineffable is one thing, and the Word of the Knowledge of All is another. Then said Mary: Suffer me, Lord, to ask thee yet again one thing. Unless when we are living we understand the knowledge of the whole Word of the Ineffable One, we shall not inherit the kingdom of Light? (233). Then the Saviour answered, and said: Of a truth, whosoever shall have received the mystery of the kingdom of Light, the same shall go to inherit it into that place the mystery whereof he hath received. But he shall not obtain the knowledge of the All, wherefore all things were made, except he shall have known that One Word of the Ineffable, the which is the knowledge of all. And again, there is no way of knowing that One Word of knowledge, except a man shall have first received the mystery of the Ineffable One; but every man shall go to inherit that place the mystery whereof he hath received. For which cause I said to you formerly: "He that believeth a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward, and he that believeth a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward," which is this: of whatsoever place each hath received the mystery, into that same place shall he go. He that hath received a humble mystery, the same shall inherit a humble place. He that hath received an excellent mystery, the same shall inherit an exalted place; and every one shall abide in his own place in the light of my kingdom, and every one shall have authority over the Course that is below him, but over that which is above himself he shall not have authority, but shall abide in his inheritance of the light of my kingdom, dwelling in a great light unto which there is no measure, next to the gods and to the Unseen Ones, and he shall be in great joy and gladness (234).

Now therefore I will speak with you touching the glory of those also that shall receive the mystery of the First Mystery. He that hath received the same, at the time when he shall depart out of this body of Matter, the Contentious Receiver shall come that they may take his soul out of the body, and that soul shall become a great Ray of light and shall fly aloft through the midst of them, and shall pass through all the regions and shall

not give-in any declaration, or defence, or symbol, token (pass-word), but shall pass through all, that he may come and reign over all the places belonging to the First Saviour. In the like manner he that hath received the Second Mystery and the Third and Fourth up to the Twelfth* (235), that soul likewise shall pass through all the regions without giving in his defence, or token, and shall come and reign over all the places belonging to the Twelve Saviours. And in like manner those receiving the second mystery shall reign over the places of the Second Saviour amongst the heirs of light. In like manner those receiving the third and the fourth up to the twelfth, shall reign over the regions of that Saviour whose mystery each hath received. But they shall not be equal with those that have received the mystery of the Ineffable One, but shall abide in the Courses of the Twelve Saviours.

Then Mary answered, saying: Lord, suffer me yet again. How is it that the First Mystery hath twelve mysteries, whereas the Ineffable hath but one? Jesus answered: Of a truth He hath but One, but that mystery maketh *three* others; the mystery is indeed *one*, but to each of them there is a different form, and moreover it maketh *five* mysteries.

As for the First Mystery, when thou hast performed it well in all the forms thereof, when thou departest out of thy body thou shalt forthwith become a great Ray of light, and it shall traverse all the regions of the Rulers and all the regions of Light, all being afraid of that light of the soul, until it shall come into its own kingdom. As for the Second Mystery, he that shall perform the same rightly in all the forms thereof, if he speak it over the head of a man departing out of the body, and *into his two ears*, that man departing out of the body when he hath received the mystery a second time, and been made partaker of the *Word of Truth*,† that man's soul shall become, when it leaveth the body, a great flood of light, so as to traverse all the regions until it cometh into the kingdom of that mystery. But and if

* This gradation seems borrowed from the twelve degrees in the Mithraic initiation.

† This is what Epiphanius relates of the practice of the Heracleonites of communicating the pass-word to the ear of the dying man.

that man hath not received that mystery, neither hath been made partaker of the words of truth, if he that hath performed that mystery shall speak the same into the ears of him who is departing out of the body, verily I say unto you, the soul of that man, although he hath not received the mystery of Light nor partaken of the words of truth, shall not be judged in the places of the Rulers, neither shall it be punished in any place, neither shall the fire touch it, by reason of the mystery of the Ineffable which goeth along with it. And they shall hasten to deliver that soul one to the other, and shall guide it Course after Course, and place (239) after place, until they bring it before the Virgin of Light: for all the regions shall fear the mystery and the *Mark** of the kingdom of the Ineffable One that is with it.

And when they have brought the soul unto the Virgin of Light, she shall see the Mark of the mystery of the kingdom of the Ineffable One which is with it. And the Virgin of Light marvelleth thereat, and she judgeth that soul, but suffereth him not to be brought unto the light until he hath accomplished the ministry of the light of that mystery, which be these: the purification of the renouncing of the world and of all the *Matter* that therein is. And the Virgin of Light sealeth him with a special seal, which is this: in the same month in which he hath departed out of the body, she will cause him to be placed in another body that shall be righteous, and shall obtain the divinity of truth and the high mystery, so that he may inherit the same, and also inherit the Light for ever and ever. This is the grace of the Second Mystery of the Ineffable One.

As touching the Third Mystery: the man that hath performed the same duly in all the forms thereof and shall *name* that mystery over the head of one departing out of the body whether he be living or *dead, or abiding in the midst of the torments of the Rulers*,† and their different fires, they shall make haste to release

* It has the impression of the royal seal stamped upon it.

† Here we have the first hint of masses performed for the dead. A similar idea is involved in the practice mentioned by St. Paul of being "baptized for the sake of deceased persons." A singular Italian usage alluded to by Dante in his 'Vendetta di Dio non Teme Suppe,' refers to something of the sort done to appease the manes. A homicide who had eaten sops in wine upon the grave of the slain man was thereby freed from the *vendetta* of the family.—(Purgat. xxxiii. 35.)

that man out of them all, and shall bring him before the Virgin of Light, who shall place him in a righteous body that shall inherit the light.

(243) Moreover in the dissolution of the Universe, that is, when the number of perfect souls is made up, and the mystery is accomplished on account of which the Universe has been created, then I will spend a thousand years, according to the years of light, ruling over the offspring of the light, and over the number of the perfect souls which have received all the mysteries. Then Mary said, Lord, how many years in the years of this world is one year of light? Jesus answered, One day of light is one thousand years of this world, wherefore thirty and six myriads and a half of the years of the world make one year of light. I shall therefore reign a thousand years of light, being king in the middle of the last *Parastates*,* being king over all the offspring of light, and over all the number of perfect souls that have received the mysteries of light. And ye, my disciples, and each one that hath received the mysteries of the Ineffable One, shall be upon my right hand and upon my left, being kings together with me in my kingdom. And those likewise that receive the three mysteries of the five mysteries of the Ineffable shall be kings together with you in the kingdom of light. But they shall not be equal with you, and with those receiving the mystery of the Ineffable One, for they shall continue kings behind you. And those receiving the five mysteries of the Ineffable shall remain behind the three mysteries being kings also. Likewise those receiving the twelve mysteries of the First Mystery, they too shall abide as kings behind the five mysteries of the Ineffable One. And they also are kings each one of them according to his course, and all receiving in the mysteries in all the places of the Court of the Ineffable One, so that they shall be kings also but come after such as have received the mystery of the First Mystery: being sent forth according to the glory of each, so that those receiving high mysteries shall dwell in high places, but those receiving humble mysteries shall abide in humble places.

* The deity whose place is next to the Supreme Light; to judge from the primary sense of the word.

These are the *Three Lots* of the Kingdom of Light, and the mysteries of these Three Lots of Light are exceeding great. Ye will find them in the great Second Book of IEV; but I will give unto you and declare unto you the mysteries of each lot, which be more exalted than any other place (246), and are chief both as to place and as to order: the which also lead all mankind within, into lofty places; according to the court belonging to their inheritance, so that ye have no need of any of the *lower mysteries*, but ye will find them in the Second Book of IEV which Enoch wrote when I spoke with him out of the Tree of Knowledge and out of the Tree of Life in the Paradise of Adam.

Now therefore after I shall have declared unto you all Emanation, I will give and I will tell unto you the Three Lots of my Kingdom which be the chief of all.

Inasmuch as *Ordeals* and *Meritorious Penances* held so important a place in the Mithraic ceremonial, it will not be irrelevant here to adduce for comparison a series of the kind as excogitated by the extravagant imagination of the Brahmins. The penances of the *demon* Taraka, the Tapa-asura, by means whereof he constrained Brahma to grant him whatever he chose to demand, are thus enumerated, each stage being of one century's duration. 1. He stood on one foot, holding up the other with both hands towards heaven, his eyes fixed immovably upon the sun. 2. He stood on one great toe. 3. He took for sustenance nothing but water. 4. He lived similarly upon air. 5. He remained immersed in the water. 6. He was buried in the earth, continuing, as during the last penance, in continued adoration. 7. He performed the same act in the fire. 8. He stood on his head with his feet upwards. 9. He stood resting on one hand. 10. He hung by his hands from a tree. 11. He hung on a tree by his feet, with his head downwards. (The twelfth degree Moor has, for some reason, omitted.)

By means like these, termed the *Yog*, the ascetic *Yogī* is enabled to obtain nine several gifts, that set him above all the laws of Nature. For example, he may expand or contract his body to any size he pleases; he may float in the air upon a sunbeam; he may exert all his sense at an infinite distance from the objects of them; with other capabilities of like kind.

And with respect to the sixth penance of Taraka, this, incredible as it appears, is still performed. To be buried alive in a small vault covered deep with earth until a crop of grain, sown over him at the time of inhumation, shall be ripe for cutting, is yet esteemed the most efficacious of good works for extorting from heaven the blessing most desired by the patient or his *employer* (the doctrine of *vicarious* atonement being most thoroughly Hindoo). The English Resident at Runjeet Singh's court has minutely described all the preparation made by the royal proxy, (whose regular trade it was thus to die for others), and the successful completion of his penance, which occupied the space of six weeks. The Resident assisted at the closing and the opening of the vault, and was certain that no deception could possibly have been practised by the Yogi. The blessing aimed at was the gift of fecundity for a favourite queen of Runjeet's.

The "Taurobolia," or *Baptism of Blood*, during the later ages of the Western Empire, held the foremost place, as the means of purification from sin, however atrocious. Prudentius has left a minute description of this horrid rite, in which the person to be regenerated, being stripped of his clothing, descended into a pit, which was covered with planks pierced full of holes; a bull was slaughtered upon them, whose hot blood, streaming down through these apertures (after the fashion of a shower-bath), thoroughly drenched the recipient below. The selection of the particular victim proves this ceremony in connection with the Mithraica, which latter, as Justin says, had a "Baptism for the remission of Sins"; and the Bull being in that religion the recognised emblem of *life*, his blood necessarily constituted the most effectual laver of regeneration. No more conclusive evidence of the value then attached to the Taurobolia can be adduced, than the fact mentioned by Lampridius that the priest-emperor Heliogabalus thought it necessary to submit to its performance; and a pit, constructed for the purpose as late as the fourth century, has lately been discovered within the sacred precincts of the Temple at Eleusis, the most holy spot in all Greece.

The subject will find its most appropriate conclusion in the

list of "Degrees" to be taken in the Mysteries, as laid down by M. Lajard, in his elaborate treatise, 'Le Culte de Mithra,'* These degrees were divided into four stages, Terrestrial, Aerial, Igneous, and Divine, each consisting of three. The Terrestrial comprised the Soldier, the Lion, the Bull. The Aerial, the Vulture, the Ostrich, the Raven. The Igneous, the Gryphon, the Horse, the Sun. The Divine, the Eagle, the Sparrow-Hawk, the Father of fathers. Lajard's theory is best elucidated by quoting his way of expounding a very frequent cylinder-subject. He finds the admission to the degree of "The Soldier," in the group where a man is seen standing before a "hierophant," or priest, who stands on the back of a bull *couchant* on a platform. The hierophant, wearing a cap tipped by a crescent, holds out to the neophyte a curved sword, symbol of admission into the Order. A priestess stands apart, separated from him by the horn, or Tree of Life, over which soars the emblem of the Assyrian Triad. Her cap is tipped by the Sun-star, but she also wears the crescent, to show the hermaphrodite nature of Mylitta!

* Lajard discovers upon the Babylonian cylinders representations of admission to the several degrees, of which they were given, as certificate to the initiated: and accounts for their enormous extant numbers by the supposition that every one, upon proceeding to a higher degree, threw away the cylinder marking the preceding one. But the complicated system of the Mithraici was evidently the creation of much later times, and of a religion vainly struggling for life.

Fig 5.

ST. AUGUSTINE ON GNOSTICISM.

The transition from orthodoxy to Gnosticism, in its last and most elaborate phase is well pointed out by the following reminiscences of St. Augustine, describing his own experiences. In his eighteenth or nineteenth year he had begun to study the Scriptures, to satisfy himself as to the truth of the religion in which he had been brought up. "Consequently I set to work to study the Holy Scriptures, in order that I might discover what was their true character. And lo! I behold a thing not discovered unto the proud, nor revealed unto babes; but humble in gait, lofty in issue, and veiled in mysteries; and I was not such a one as could enter therein, neither to bow down my neck unto the steps thereof. For I did not think then, as I speak *now*, when I was studying Scripture, but it seemed to me unworthy to be compared with the sublimity of Cicero's eloquence. Nevertheless that Scripture was such as should grow up together with babes, but I disdained to be a babe, and being puffed up with pride I fancied myself a grown-up man. So it came to pass that I fell in with men full of pride, dotards, too carnal, and great talkers, in whose mouth is a snare of the Devil, and bird-lime made up with a mixture of the syllables of Thy Name, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Paraclete's, our Comforter the Holy Ghost. All these names did not proceed out of their mouth except as far as the sound and echo of the tongue go, but their heart was utterly void of truth. And they used to repeat 'Truth and Truth,' and so did they repeat her name to me, but she was nowhere amongst them, but they spoke false things, not only concerning thee who art the Truth in truth, but even concerning the elements of this world of ours, thy creation; concerning which even the philosophers, who declared what is true, I ought to have slighted for the love of Thee, O my Father, the Supreme Good, the Beauty of all things beautiful. O Truth! Truth! how inwardly did the marrow of my soul sigh after thee even then, whilst *they* were

perpetually dinning thy name into my ears, and after various fashions with the mere voice, and with *many and huge books* of theirs. And these were the dishes upon which were served up to me who was hungering after thee, nothing but the *Sun and the Moon*, thy fair works indeed, but not thyself, and not even the *first* amongst thy works. For thy spiritual works are before those corporeal works, however splendid and heavenly they may be. But even for those, thy higher works, I hungered and thirsted not, but for thee only, O Truth! wherein there is no change, neither shadow of turning. And again there were set before me, in those same dishes, splendid phantoms, than which it were even better to love the Sun himself, for *he* was true as far as regards one's eyes, rather than to love those fictions whereby the soul was deceived through the eyes. And yet because I believed them to be Thee, I ate thereof though not greedily, because Thou didst not taste in my mouth as thou really art, for thou wert not those empty fictions; neither was I nourished thereby, but rather weakened. Food in dreams is like to the food of one awake, yet the sleepers are not fed by the same, for they sleep on: but those dishes were not in any wise like unto Thee as thou *now* hast spoken to me, &c."

Fig. 6.

THE WORSHIP OF SERAPIS.

I. The Figured Representations of Serapis.

The next great series of monuments to be considered are those emanating from the worship of Serapis, that mysterious deity, who, under his varying forms, had, during the second and third centuries of our era, completely usurped the sovereignty of his brother Jupiter, and reduced him to the rank of a mere planetary Genius. Unlike the generality of the deities who figure upon the Gnostic stones, the *Alexandrian* Serapis does not belong to the primitive mythology of Egypt.* His worship may be said to be only coeval with the rise of Alexandria, into which city it was introduced from Sinope by the first Ptolemy, in consequence of the command (and repeated threats, in case of neglect) of a vision which had appeared to him. After three years of ineffectual negotiation, Ptolemy at last obtained the god from Scythotherius, king of Sinope; but when the citizens still refused to part with their idol, a report was spread, that it had spontaneously found its way from the temple down to the Egyptian ships lying in the harbour.

The prevalent opinion amongst the Greeks was that the figure represented Jupiter *Dis* (Aidoneus) and the one by his side, *Proserpine.* This latter the envoys were ordered by the same divine messenger, to leave in its native shrine. Another story, also mentioned by Tacitus,† made the statue to have been brought from Seleucia by Ptolemy III, but this rested on slighter authority. It is, however, a curious confirmation of this last tradition that Serapis is named by Plutarch ("Alexander,") as the chief deity of *Babylon* (Seleucia in later times) at the date of the Macedonian Conquest—a proof that

* The difference between him and the ancient Theban Serapis (as the Greeks translated his title "Osor-Api"), shall be pointed out farther on.

† Who narrates the whole affair at great length—a proof of the influence of the religion in his day—in his History, iv. 84.

he at least regarded that god as identical with *Belus*. Now, it is a remarkable coincidence that *Ana*, the First Person in the primitive Chaldean Triad, is likewise "King of the Lower World," and that his symbol, the vertical wedge, stands also for the numeral 60, which last is often used to express hieroglyphically the name Ana.

It was Timotheus, an Athenian Eumolpid, and, in virtue of his descent, Diviner to the king, who indicated Pontus as the residence of the unknown god, whose apparition had so disquieted the monarch by commanding himself to be sent for without declaring whence. The figure, seen in the vision, was that of a *youth*, a circumstance that tallies ill with the mature majesty of the great god of Alexandria.* But the Helios Dionysos, a veritable Chrishna, who graces the reverse of the gold medallion of Pharnaces II, coined at Sinope in the following century, agrees much more exactly with this description of the nocturnal visitor.

Speedily did Serapis become the sole lord of his new home; and speculations as to his true nature employed the ingenuity of the philosophers at Alexandria, down to the times when they were superseded by the discussions on the doctrine of the Trinity, waged with equal zeal but infinitely worse temper. Every conflicting religion strove to claim him as the grand representative of their own doctrine. Macrobius has preserved one of the most ingenious of these interpretations, as made by the 'Rationalists,' a party so strong amongst the later Greeks (I. 20). "The City of Alexandria pays an almost frantic worship to Serapis and Isis, nevertheless they show that all this veneration is merely offered to the *Sun* under that name, both by their placing the corn-measure upon his head, and by accompanying his statue with the figure of an animal having three heads; of these heads, the middle and the largest one is a

* The great god of Assyria, Adad, "The One," the oracle-giving Jupiter of Heliopolis, was thus figured in his *golden* statue as a beardless youth, brandishing aloft a whip, and holding in his left hand the thunderbolt and wheat-ears. The rays crowning his head pointed downwards to signify their influence upon the earth, who stood before him in the figure of *Atergatis*, the rays in her crown pointing upwards, to express the *springing up* of her gifts. She was supported, like Cybele, upon the backs of lions.

lion's, that which rises on the right is a dog's in a peaceable and fawning attitude; whilst the left part of the neck terminates in that of a ravening wolf. All these bestial forms are connected together by the wreathed body of a serpent, which raises its head up towards the god's right hand, on which side the monster is placed. The *lion's* head typifies the Present, because its condition between the Past and the Future is strong and fervent. The Past is signified by the *wolf's* head, because the memory of all things past is scratched away from us and utterly consumed. The emblem of the fawning *dog* represents the Future, the domain of inconstant and flattering hope. But whom should Past, Present and Future serve except their Authors? His head crowned with the *calathus* typifies the *height* of the planet above us, also his all-powerful *capaciousness*, since unto him all things earthly do return, being drawn up by the heat he emits. Moreover when Nicocreon, tyrant of Cyprus, consulted Serapis as to which of the gods he ought to be accounted, he received the following response :—

> "'A god I am, such as I show to thee,
> The starry heavens my head; my trunk the sea;
> Earth forms my feet; mine ears the air supplies;
> The sun's far-darting, brilliant rays mine eyes.'" *

From all this it is evident that the nature of Serapis and the Sun is one and indivisible. Again, Isis is universally worshipped as the type of earth, or Nature in subjection to the Sun. For this cause the body of the goddess is covered with continuous rows of *udders*, to declare that the universe is maintained by the perpetual nourishing of the Earth or Nature." This last curious remark shows that Macrobius regarded the Alexandrian Isis as the same with the Ephesian Diana, for the ancient Isis of Egypt had only the usual complement of breasts. This philosopher had started with the axiom (I. 17), "Omnes deos referri ad Solem," and begins by demonstrating from the various epithets

* I cannot help suspecting that this description supplied Basilides with the idea of his celebrated *Pantheus*, the Abraxas-figure. The head of the *bird* was the fittest emblem of the air, the *serpent*, according to Herodotus, was the offspring of earth, the *breast* of man was the Homeric attribute of Neptune.

of Apollo, that *he* was the same god with the one styled the Sun. He then proceeds to prove the same of Bacchus, Hermes, Aesculapius, and Hercules. His ingenious explanation of the serpent-entwined rod of Hermes, and club of Aesculapius, will be found applied further on to the elucidation of the remarkable symbol on the reverse of all the Chnuphis amulets. After this, Macrobius passes in review the attributes and legends of Adonis and Atys, also of Osiris and Horus, and comes to the same conclusion concerning the real nature of all these personages, adding parenthetically a very fanciful exposition of the Signs of the Zodiac, as being merely so many emblems of the solar influence in the several regions of creation. Nemesis, Paris, Saturn, Jupiter, and finally the Assyrian Adad, are all reduced by him to the same signification.

This brings us to that most wondrous identification of all, which Hadrian mentions in a letter to his brother-in-law Servianus, preserved by the historian Vopiscus in his Life of the Tyrant Saturninus. "Those who worship Serapis are likewise Christians; even those who style themselves the bishops of Christ are devoted to Serapis. The very Patriarch himself,* when he comes to Egypt, is forced by some to adore Serapis, by others to worship Christ. There is but one God for them all, Him do the Christians, Him do the Jews, Him do the Gentiles, all alike worship." Severus Alexander, too, who daily paid his devotions to Christ and Abraham, did none the less expend large sums in decorating the temples of Serapis and Isis "with statues, *couches*, and all things pertaining to their Mysteries,"† whilst he left the other gods of Rome to take care of themselves.

And as connected with the same subject, it may be here observed that the conventional portrait of the Saviour is in all probability borrowed from the head of Serapis, so full of grave and pensive majesty. Of the first converts, the Jewish foredilections were so powerful that we may be sure that no attempt was made to portray His countenance until many generations

* The Patriarch of Tiberias, head of the Jewish religion, after the destruction of Jerusalem.

† A very favourite representation of Isis upon our talismans shows her reclining upon a couch.

after all who had beheld it on earth had passed away.* Nevertheless, the importance so long attached to the pretended letter of Lentulus to the emperor, Tiberius, describing Christ's personal appearance, demands a notice in this place. Its monkish Latinity and style betray it, at first sight, for the authorship of some mediæval divine. Yet, incredible as it may seem, even a learned man like Grynæus has been so besotted through his pious longing for the *reality* of such a record, as to persuade himself that Lentulus, a Roman Senator and an eminent historian, could have written in the exact phrase of a mendicant friar. "There has appeared in our times, and still lives, a Man of great virtue, named Christ Jesus, who is called by the Gentiles a Prophet of Truth, but whom his own disciples called the Son of God; raising the dead, and healing diseases. A man indeed of lofty stature, handsome, having a venerable countenance, which the beholders can both love and fear. His hair verily somewhat wavy and curling, somewhat brightish and resplendent in colour, flowing down upon his shoulders, having a parting in the middle of the head after the fashion of the Nazarenes, &c." (Grynæus, 'Orthodoxia' I. p. 2.) This forgery reminds one of Pliny's remark, "Pariunt desideria non traditos vultus, sicutin Homero evenit." The wish is father to the image of the venerated object; and the conception is too joyfully accepted by the loving soul for it to trouble itself overmuch in scrutinizing the legitimacy of the same: for, as Martial exclaims with full truth "quis enim damnet sua vota libenter?"

But to return to the Egypt of the times of Gnosticism. In the very focus of that theosophy, Alexandria, the syncretistic sects which sprang up so rankly there during the three first centuries of the Roman empire, had good grounds for making out Serapis a prototype of Christ, considered as Lord and Maker of all, and Judge of the quick and the dead. For the response given to Nicocreon, above quoted, evinces that the philosophers at least saw in Serapis nothing more than the emblem of the 'Anima

* What proves the want of any real authority for the portraits of the Saviour is the fact that the earliest monuments in sculpture or painting, represent him as *youthful* and *beardless*.

Mundi,' the *Spirit* of whom Nature universal is the *body*, for they held the doctrine of

> ". . . . . the one harmonious whole,
> Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

So that by an easy transition Serapis came to be worshipped as the embodiment of the One Supreme, whose representative on earth was Christ.

The very *construction* of the grand Colossus of Serapis ingeniously set forth these ideas of his character. It was formed out of plates of *all the metals*, artfully joined together, to typify the harmonious union of different elements in the fabric of the universe, the "moles et machina mundi." This statue was placed upon the summit of an artificial hill (whose vast interior was divided into vaulted halls, containing the famous library), ascended by a flight of a hundred steps—a style of building totally diverse from the native Egyptian and the Grecian model, but exactly following the Indian usage, as may be seen by the grand pagoda of Siva at Tanjore, and by the *topes* and *dagobas* of the Buddhists.

The remarkable construction of this Colossus may reasonably be supposed to have suggested to the Alexandrian Jew, who *completed* the Book of Daniel, the notion of the similarly compacted *Image* which figures in Nebuchadnezzar's Dream. That his description of the latter was penned long after the coming of Serapis into that city is manifest from the minute details this *prophet* gives concerning the constant squabbles going on between Antiochus Epiphanes and Ptolemy Philometor, his nephew; together with the final intervention of the Roman Senate. The popular belief of the Alexandrians (Christian as well as pagan) was that the profanation of this statue would be the signal for heaven and earth to collapse at once into pristine chaos—a notion bearing clear testimony to the grand idea embodied by the figure. At last, however, although his worship, thus defended by deep-rooted fear, had been tolerated by the Christian government long after the other gods of Egypt had been swept away, this wonderful Colossus was broken down by "that perpetual enemy of peace and virtue" the

Patriarch Theophilus, in the reign of Theodosius; and its mutilated trunk, dragged triumphantly through the streets by the mob of rejoicing fanatics, was ultimately buried in the Hippodrome.

Like that of Mithras, the worship of Serapis was widely diffused over the West. A very curious exemplification of this is to be found in Ammianus' notice that Mederich, king of the Alemanni, had, when detained as a hostage in Gaul, been taught certain Greek Mysteries, and for that reason changed the name of his son Aganerich into *Serapion.* But Serapis had a natural claim to the adoration of the Gauls, who, as Cæsar tells us, actually boasted of descent from *Dis Pater.*

The new-comer from Sinope does not seem to have brought his name with him. When Ptolemy consulted his own priesthood upon this important point, Manetho boldly identified the Pontic god with their own Osor-Apis, chiefly on the score of his attribute Cerberus, which he considered the counterpart of the hippopotamus-headed Typhon who attends Osor-Apis in his character of sovereign of the Lower World. This deity is no other than the Bull Apis, who, after death, assumes the figure of Osiris, the regular form of Egyptian apotheosis, and so frequently seen applied to deceased kings. Osor-Apis, as he now becomes, is depicted as a man with the head of a bull, and carrying the ensigns by which we usually recognize Osiris. The god of Alexandria therefore differs in form as widely as in origin from the original patron of Thebes, with whom he has no other affinity than in name, and *that* rests only on the arbitrary interpretation of the Egyptian priests, so successful in persuading the Greeks that the mythology of the whole world was but a plagiarism from their own.

M. Mariette in 1860 excavated the Theban Serapeum, as it was called in Roman times, with its long avenue of sphinxes; he also discovered the catacombs where the Apis Bulls were deposited after death, and found there no fewer than sixty, two of their mummies yet reposing undisturbed. It is amusing to notice how neatly the Greeks turned the Coptic Osor-Apis into the more euphonious ὁ Σάραπις.

II. The Probable Origin of Serapis.

The ancient speculations cited in the preceding chapter are all baseless theories, due to the ingenious refinements of the Alexandrian literati, and springing out of the system of allegorical interpretation in which the New Platonists so much delighted. It is evident that upon his *first introduction* into Egypt, Serapis was regarded by the Alexandrians as identical with Aïdoneus, or Dis, the Lord of the Lower World. Now, all his attributes suggest him to have been of *Indian* origin, and no other than *Yama*, "Lord of Hell," attended by his dog "Çarbara," *the spotted*, who has the epithet "Triçira," *three-headed*, and by his serpent "Çesha," called "Regent of Hades;" in fact, some have discovered in the name Serapis* but the Grecian form of Yama's epithet, "Sraddha-deva," *Lord of the obsequies*, that is, of the funeral sacrifices offered to the *Pitris* or *Manes*. Yama also is styled "Lord of souls," and "Judge of the dead;" another office assimilating him to Serapis in the character under which the latter came to be specially regarded —a point, moreover, which at a later date afforded stronger reasons for identifying him with Christ. A plausible etymology of the name Serapis may be found in another of Yama's epithets, "Asrik-pa" the *Blood-drinker*. This explanation is confirmed to some extent by the ancient tradition, of which Homer makes such fine use when he describes Ulysses' mode of evoking the ghosts, and their eagerness to lap up the life-blood of the victim (Od. xi. 35):—

> "Seizing the victim sheep I pierced their throats;
> Flowed the black blood, and filled the hollow trench;
> Then from the abyss, eager their thirst to slake,
> Came swarming up the spirits of the dead."

And connected with the same notion was the practice of strewing *roses* over the graves of departed friends—

> "Purpureos spargam flores et fungar inani munere,"

for (as Servius explains it) the *red* colour of the flower

* It is not improbable that the name under which the god was worshipped at *Sinope* had something of this sound; and which suggested to Manetho the idea of identifying him with his own Osor-Api.

represented *blood*, and thereby served as a substitute for the living victim.*

This analogy between Yama and Serapis may be further extended by the consideration of certain other points connected with the office of the former deity. For example, unto the souls of the righteous he appears as "Dharma-rāja," and has a servant "Karma-la" (the Hermes Psychopompos of the Greeks), who brings them into his presence upon a self-moving car. But unto the wicked he is "Yama," and has for *them* another minister, "Kash-Mala," who drags them before him with halters round their necks, over rough and stony places. Other titles of Yama are "Kritānta" and "Mrityu." The connection of the latter with *Mors* is evident enough, making it a fitting appellation for *Dis* (*Ditis*), in which again unmistakably lies the root of our name *Death*, applied to the same Principle of Destruction.

Yama as "Sraddha-deva," monarch of "Pātāla" (the infernal regions), has for consort Bhavani, who hence takes the title of "Patala-devi," as upon Earth she is "Bhu-devi," in heaven, "Swardevi." Her lord owns, besides Çarbara, another dog named "Çyama," the *Black One* (now we see wherefore the mediæval familiar spirits like Cornelius Agrippa's black spaniel, and Faustus' "pudel" chose that particular figure), whom he employs as the minister of his vengeance. As Judge of Souls he displays two faces, the one benign, the other terrific. Another of his titles is "Kalantika," *Time as the Destroyer:* it can hardly be a mere accidental coincidence that such was the exact name given to the head-dress worn by the Egyptian priests when officiating—in later times a purple cloth covering the head, and falling down upon the neck, surmounted by two plumes.

* One of the most frequented places of pilgrimage at Benares is the "Gyan Bapi," "Well of Knowledge," in the depths whereof Siva himself resides. It was dug by the genius Rishi, with that god's own trident, to relieve the world after a twelve years' drought. The pilgrims throw into it offerings of all kinds, flowers included. Another well in the same city, of supreme efficacy for the washing away of all sin, is the *Manikarnika*, so called from the earring of Mahadeva, which fell into it. Vishnu had dug this well with his *changra*, quoit, and filled it with the luminous sweat of his body.

"Kali-Bhavani," the Destructive Female Principle is represented* in this character with a visage exactly identical with the most ancient type of the Grecian Gorgon—such as we still behold it guarding the Etruscan sepulchres, and lowering horrifically upon the sacrilegious intruder; as in that notable example in the tomb of the Volumni at Perugia, where it forms the centrepiece of the ceiling of the grand hall. Formed of a Tiger's head in its first conception by the excited fancy of Hindoo superstition, the Etruscan demon still exhibits the same protruded tongue, huge tusks, glaring eyes, wings in the hair, and serpents twining about the throat. Of such aspect was doubtless that "Gorgon's Head, the work of the Cyclops," which was shown to Pausanias as the most notable object in the Argive Acropolis—a proof that the earliest essays of Pelasgic art had been made in realising this idea. Again, in that most ancient monument of Grecian art, the Coffer of Cypselus (made before B.C. 600), the same traveller states (v. 19.), "Behind Polynices stands a female figure, having tusks as savage as those of a wild beast, and the nails of her fingers like unto talons: the inscription above her, *they tell you* means Κῆρ (Fate)." This name therefore must have been a *foreign* word, translated to Pausanias by the Custodian of the Temple. Plutarch (Life of Aratus) supplies another singular illustration of the Worship of these terrific idols of the olden time in the most polished ages of Greece. The Artemis of Pellene was of so dreadful an aspect that none dared to look upon her: and when carried in procession, her sight blasted the very tree and crops as she passed. When the Ætolians were actually in possession of and plundering the town, her priestess, by bringing this image out from the shrine, struck them with such terror that they made a precipitate retreat. This Artemis consequently must have been a veritable Hecate, a true Queen of Hell, an idol moreover of *wood*, *ξόανον* (like her of Ephesus), otherwise the priestess had not been able to wield it so effectually to scare away the marauders. Again, the recorded dream of Cimon, which presaged his death, was that a black bitch bayed

* Roth, 'Zeitschrift der Morgenländischen Gesellschaft,' iv. p. 425, and Mure in Royal Asiatic Society's Journal, i. p. 287.

at him in a half-human voice, "Come to me; I and my whelps will receive thee gladly." The Hellenic gods, now and then shew themselves under an aspect strangely at variance with their usual benevolent and *jovial* character. A true Siva was that "Dionysos Omestes" (The Cannibal), unto whom Themistocles, forced by the Diviners, sacrificed the three sons of Sandauce, own sister to Xerxes, when taken prisoners on the eve of the Battle of Salamis. It must be remembered that tradition made Perseus bring back the Gorgon's Head, trophy of his success, from Ethiopia, a synonym at first for the remotest East—it being only in Roman times that "Ethiopia" was restricted to a single province of Africa. The *harpe* too, the weapon lent to the hero by Hermes, is from its form no other than the ankuşa, elephant-hook, which is carried for attribute by so many of the Hindoo Deities.* Sufficient explanation this why Persephone (*Destroying-slayer*) was assigned by the earliest Greeks as Consort to Aidoneus; and also why Ulysses, on his visit to her realms, should have been alarmed,

> "Lest from deep Hell Persephone the dread
> Should send the terror of the Gorgon's Head."

From the influence of this terror upon the otherwise undaunted wanderer, these same two lines came to be considered as endued with a wonderfully strong repellent power, for Marcellus Empiricus prescribes them to be whispered into the ear of any one choking from a bone or other matter sticking in his throat; or else to write them out on a paper to be tied around his throat, "Which will be equally effectual."

Lucian remarks ('Philopatris,') that the reason why the ancient warriors bore the Gorgon's Head upon their shields was because it served for an amulet against dangers of every sort; on the same account, in all likelihood, was it put for device on many archaic coinages; Populonia, Paros, &c. For

* The Gorgon of the gems ('Ant. Gems,' Pl. XX., 4), and of the coin of Neapolis is regularly to be seen, to this day, sculptured in relief upon the pillar set up on each side of the gates of Hindoo temples, as I am informed by our great oriental archæologist, Col. Pearse. She goes by the name of "Keeper of the Gate." Now we see why her head decorated the pediments of temples in Greece and Rome, and formed the keystone of triumphal arches even in the time of Constantine, as the lately-discovered entrance to his "Forum of Taurus" convincingly attests.

what could be more effective for the purpose of scaring away all evil spirits than the visible countenance of the Queen of Hell? Timomachus the painter (contemporary with the first Cæsar) made his reputation by such a subject, "præcipue tamen ars ei favisse in Gorgone visa est," are the words of Pliny, which masterpiece is supposed the original of the horrific fresco discovered at Pompeii, the finest example of the art that has reached our times. Many centuries after the fall of Paganism did this image retain its power; Münter figures ('Sinnbilder der Christen') a Gorgon's Head surrounded by the phonetic legend, +VOMEΛAINHMEΛAINOMENAOCOΦICHΛHEC EKEOCΛEONBPVXHCEIKEOCAPNOCKVMHCH, intended for — Υἱὸς Θεοῦ · Μελαίνη μελαινομένη, ὡς ὄφις εἴλει ἡσυχῇ, ὡς λέων βρυχήσει, καὶ ὡς ἄρνος κοιμήσει. "Black, blackened one, as a serpent thou coilest thyself quietly, thou shalt roar like a lion, thou shalt go to sleep like a lamb!" The same inscription, but so barbarously spelt as to be unintelligible, probably forms the legend upon the famous Seal of St. Servatius, preserved in Maestricht Cathedral. The seal is alarge disc of green jasper, engraved on both sides, and is attached to a small slab of porphyry, traditionally passing for the Saint's portable altar. Servatius died A.D. 389, but the workmanship of his seal betokens the tenth or eleventh century for its origin. An important evidence of the veneration of the Christian Byzantines for their guardian demon is afforded by the exhumation (Spring of 1869) in the Ahmedan, Constantinople, of the Colossal Gorgonion, six feet high from chin to brow, carved in almost full relief on each side of an immense marble block, which once formed the keystone of the gateway to the Forum of Constantine. Though the execution betrays the paralysis of the Decline, yet the general effect still remains grandiose and awe-inspiring.

Having thus traced Bhavani in her progress from Archaic Greek to Byzantine times, let us observe the part she plays in the superstitions of Imperial Rome. The idea, full of novel horrors, was gladly seized by the extravagant genius of Lucan*

* Who had in all probability learnt them at some of the Mysteries, all of Asiatic origin, so popular in his times with all persons making pretensions to the title of philosophers.

to animate the exorcisms of his Thessalian sorceress Erictho (Pharsalia, vi. 695).

"And Chaos, ever seeking to enfold
Unnumbered worlds in thy confusion old:
And Earth's dull god, who pining still beneath
Life's lingering burthen, pinest for tardy death.
* * * * *
Tisiphone, and Thou her sister fell,
Megaera, thus regardless of my spell,
Why haste ye not with sounding scourge to chase
The soul accursed through hell's void formless space?
Say, must I call you by the names your right,
And drag the hell-hounds forth to th' upper light?
Midst death I'll dog your steps at every turn,
Chase from each tomb, and drive from every urn.
And *thou*, still wont with visage not thine own,
To join the gods round the celestial throne,
Though yet thy pallor doth the truth betray,
And hint the horrors of thy gloomy
Thee, Hecate, in thy *true* form I'll show,
Nor let thee change the face thou wearest below.
I'll tell what feasts thy lingering steps detain
In earth's deep centre, and thy will enchain;
Tell what the pleasures that thee so delight,
And what tie binds thee to the King of Night;
And by what union wert thou so defiled,
Thy very mother would not claim her child,
—I'll burst thy caves, the world's most evil Lord,
And pour the sun upon thy realms abhorred,
Striking thee lifeless by the sudden day,
If still reluctant my behests to obey.
Or must I call *Him* at whose whispered *Name*
Earth trembles awestruck through her inmost frame?
Who views the Gorgon's face without a veil,
And with her own scourge makes Erinnys quail;
To whom the abyss, unseen by you, is given,
To which your regions are the upper heaven,
Who dares the oath that binds all gods to break,
And marks the sanction of the Stygian lake?"

All these personifications are in a spirit quite foreign to that of Grecian mythology, but thorougly imbued with that of India. Lucan's Chaos is the Hindoo Destroyer, the Negro giant, "Maha-Pralaya," swallowing up the gods themselves in his wide-gaping jaws. His "Rector terrae" pining for the promised annihilation that is so long in coming, finds no parallel in classical

religions,* and his character remains to me utterly inexplicable. His Furies "hunting souls to make them fly," instead of being like the old awful Eumenides, the impartial avengers of guilt, are mere demons, or churchyard ghouls. But his Hecate is manifestly Bhavani herself; her "facies Erebi" being the Gorgonian aspect which the latter was when reigning in "Yama-putri," but which she puts off when presiding on earth, or in heaven; whilst the "infernal banquets" that so enchant her are the human sacrifices regularly offered up by Bhavani's special votaries, the Thugs. In the first, or *infernal* aspect, a true "facies Erebi," she is depicted wearing a necklace of human skulls and grasping in each hand a naked victim ready to be devoured. She probably still shows us in what shape the Artemis of Pallene appeared to scare away the Ætolian plunderers. The title of her lord "pessimus mundi arbiter" is far more applicable to the Destroyer Siva than to the inoffensive Pluto of the Greeks. Unless indeed the Neronean poet may have heard something of the Demiurgus Ildabaoth, "Son of Darkness, or Erebus," existing under a different name in some ancient theogony. The Gnostics did not invent—they merely borrowed and applied.

Bhavani, in her character of "Kali," is sculptured as a terminal figure, the exact counterpart in outline of the Ephesian Diana. Even the stags, those remarkable adjuncts to the *shoulders* of the latter, are seen in a similar position spinging from Kali's *hands*. The multiplied breasts of the Ephesian statue were also given to the Alexandrian Isis, who is allowed by Creuzer and the rest to be the Hindoo goddess in her character of "Parvati." Now this remark applies only to her statue in the Serapeum, not to those belonging to the ancient Pharaonic religion; and Macrobius's expressions show that her real character *there* was as much a matter of dispute as that of her companion, Serapis. Again, Diana as *Hecate* or Proserpine, belongs to the infernal world over which she rules with the same authority as Bhavani over Yama-Putri. The Ephesian

* Unless, perhaps, obscurely shadowed forth by Hesiod, from whom Milton drew his grand picture of Chaos, on whom wait—

"Orcus and Hades and the *dreaded Name*
Of Demogorgon."

image, made of cypress wood, had "fallen down from heaven," which only means, had come from some very remote and unknown source.

III. Monuments of the Serapis Worship.

Innumerable are the statues, bas-reliefs, and gems, many of them in the best syle of Roman art, emanating from the worship of Serapis; a thing not to be wondered at in the case of a divinity whose idea involved the two strongest principles that actuate the conduct of mankind—the love of riches and the fear of death. For the god of the subterranean world was necessarily lord also of its treasures; a truth expressed by the dedication to Serapis of an altar as "Iovi custodi et genio thesaurorum" (Winckelmann, 'Pierres Gravées de Stosch,' p. 83). And similarly the older Roman Pluto takes the title of "Jupiter Stygius;" but the comprehensiveness of the idea as expanded by the monotheistic tendency of later times is most fully manifested by the invocation (Raspe, No. 1490) ΕΙϹ ΖΕΥϹ ϹΑΡΑΠΙϹ ΑΓΙΟΝ ΟΝΟΜΑ ϹΑΒΑΩ ΦΩϹ ΑΝΑΤΟΛΗ ΧΘΩΝ "One Jupiter, Serapis, Holy Name, Sabaoth, the Light, the Day-spring, the Earth!"

Talismanic gems very commonly bear the full length figure, or the bust of Serapis, with the legend ΕΙϹ ΘΕΟϹ ϹΑΡΑΠΙϹ (often abbreviated into Є·Θ·Ϲ), "There is but one God, and he is Serapis:" ΕΙϹ ΖΩΝ ΘΕΟϹ, "The One Living God." Sometimes the purpose of the amulet is distinctly expressed by the inscription, ΝΙΚΑΟ ϹΑΡΑΠΙϹ ΤΟΝ ΦΘΟΝΟΝ, "Baffle the Evil-eye, O Serapis:" or in the curious example published by Caylus, where the god stands between Venus and Horus, and the legend ΚΑΤΑ ΧΡΗΜΑΤΙϹΜΟΝ intimates that the gem had been "so" engraved in consequence of a vision or other divine intimation. Around his bust on a jasper (Praun) appears the invocation, convincing proof of his supposed supremacy, ΦΥΛΑϹϹΕ ΔΙΑ, "Protect Jupiter," the ancient king of heaven being now degraded to the rank of an astral genius and benignant horoscope. Invocations like the

above bear the unmistakable stamp of the age when the old, liberal, mythology of the West, which had pictured Heaven as a well-ordered monarchy peopled by innumerable deities, each one having his own proper and undisputed position therein, was fast giving place to the gloomy superstitions of Syria, which made the tutelary divinity of each nation or sect the sole god of Heaven, condemning those of all other races as mere deceivers and evil spirits.

There are, however, many gems, fine both as to material and workmanship, which give us, besides Serapis, the primitive Egyptian gods exactly as they appear in the most ancient monuments, but engraved in the unmistakable style of Roman art. Most of these are to be referred to the efforts of Hadrian to resuscitate the *forms* of that old religion whose *life* had long before passed away in this equally with the grander department of sculpture. Under his zealous patronage, the religion of the Pharaohs blazed up for a moment with a brilliant but factitious lustre, a phenomenon often observed to precede the extinction of a long established system.* To this period belongs a beautiful sard of my own, which represents Serapis enthroned exactly as Macrobius describes him, whilst in front *stands* Isis, holding in one hand the sistrum, in the other a wheatsheaf, with the legend, ΗΚΥΡΙΑΕΙCIC ΑΓΝΗ·† "Immaculate is our Lady Isis!" This address is couched in the exact words applied later to the personage who succeeded to the form, titles, symbols and ceremonies of Isis with even less variation than marked the other interchange alluded to above. The "Black Virgins" so highly venerated in certain French Cathedrals during the long night of the Middle Ages, proved when at last examined by antiquarian eyes to be basalt statues of the Egyptian goddess, which having merely changed the name, continued to receive more than pristine adoration. Her devotees carried into the new priesthood the ancient badges of their profession; "the obligation to celibacy," the tonsure, the

* Shering, in his 'Benares,' observes that the Hindoos are now building and restoring temples everywhere with greater zeal and cost than at any time since the final overthrow of Buddhism; and yet the religion itself is utterly worn out.

† In inscriptions of this period the long I is usually written EI.

bell, and the surplice—omitting unfortunately the frequent and complete ablutions enjoined by the older ritual. The holy image still moves in procession as when Juvenal laughed at it (vi. 530), "Escorted by the tonsured, surpliced, train." Even her proper title "Domina," exact translation of the Sanscrit *Isi*, survives with slight change, in the modern "Madonna" (Mater-Domina). By a singular permutation of meaning the flower borne in the hand of each, the lotus, former symbol of *perfection* (because in leaf, flower, fruit, it gave the figure of the Circle, as Jamblichus explains it), and therefore of fecundity, is now interpreted as signifying the opposite to the last—virginity itself. The tinkling *sistrum*, so well pleasing to Egyptian ears, has unluckily found a substitute in that most hideous of all noise-makers, the clangorous bell. But this latter instrument came directly from the Buddhistic ritual in which it forms as essential a part of the religion as it did in Celtic Christianity, where the Holy Bell was the actual *object* of worship to the new converts. The bell in its present form was unknown to the Greeks and Romans; its normal shape is Indian, and the first true bell-founders were the Buddhist Chinese. Again *relic-worship* became, after the third century, the chief form of Christianity throughout the world; which finds its parallel in the fact that a fragment of a bone of a Buddha (that is, holy man in whom the deity had dwelt during his life) is actually indispensable for the consecration of a *dagobah*, or temple of that religion; equally as a similar particle of saintliness is a *sine quâ non* for the setting-up of a Roman-Catholic altar.

Very curious and interesting would it be to pursue the subject, and trace how much of Egyptian, and second-hand Indian, symbolism has passed over into the possession of a church that would be beyond measure indignant at any reclamation on the part of the rightful owners. The high cap and hooked staff of the Pharaonic god become the mitre and crosier of the bishop; the very term, *Nun*, is Coptic, and with its present meaning: the erected oval symbol of productive Nature, christened into the *Vesica piscis*, becomes the proper framework for pictures of the Divinity: the *Crux ansata*, that very expressive emblem of the union of the Male and Female

Principles, whence comes all Life, and therefore placed as the symbol of Life in the hands of gods, now, by simple inversion, changes into the orb and cross, the recognised distinction of sovereignty.

But to give a last glance at Serapis and his attributes: his bust on gems is often accompanied by a figure resembling a short truncheon from the top of which spring three leaves, or spikes. Can it be some plant sacred to the god, or else some instrument of power?—certain it is that Iva, Assyrian god of Thunder, carries in his hand a *fulmen* of somewhat similar form in the Ninivitish sculptures. A dwarf column, supporting a globe, a corded bale, the letter M,* are all frequently to be seen in the same companionship. Another symbol is of such mighty import in the domains of the Lord of Souls, that its discussion may fairly claim to itself the space of the following section.

* Perhaps the Greek numeral = 40, which was the number sacred to the Assyrian Hoa, god of Water. A conjecture, therefore, may be hazarded that these figures symbolise The Four Elements under the protection of the supreme Lord, Serapis.

Fig. 7.

THE *CADUCEUS*, AND ITS SYMBOLISM.

Macrobius seems to afford us some clue for solving this enigma by his remarks upon the true universality of the sun-worship under different names (Sat. i. 19). "That under the form of Mercury the *Sun* is really worshipped is evident also from the *Caduceus* which the Egyptians have fashioned in the shape of two dragons (asps), male and female joined together, and consecrated to Mercury. These serpents in the middle parts of their volume are tied together in the knot called the 'Knot of Hercules;' whilst their upper parts bending backwards in a circle, by pressing their mouths together as if kissing complete the circumference of the circle; and their tails are carried back to touch the staff of the Caduceus; and adorn the latter with wings springing out of the same part of the staff. The meaning of the Caduceus with reference to the nativity of man, technically termed his *genesis* (or horoscope), is thus explained by the Egyptians: they teach that *four deities* preside and attend at man's birth—the Daimon (his genius), Fortune, Love, and Necessity. By the two first of these they hold that the Sun and the Moon are meant; because the Sun, as the author of spirit, heat, and light, is the producer and guardian of human life, and therefore is esteemed the *Daimon* that is the *god* of the person born. The Moon is the *Fortune*, because she is the president over our bodies which are the sport of a variety of accidents. *Love* is signified by the kissing of the serpents; *Necessity*, by the knot in which they are tied. The reason for adding the *wings* has been fully discussed above. For a symbol of this nature the convolution of the serpents has been selected in preference to anything else, because of the *flexuosity* of the course of both these luminaries. From this cause it comes, that the serpent is attached to the figures both of Aesculapius and of Hygiea, because these deities are explained as expressing the nature of the Sun and the Moon. For Aesculapius is the health-giving influence proceeding out of the substance of the

Sun, that benefits the souls and bodies of mortals.* Hygieia again is the influence of the nature of the Moon, by which the bodies of things animated are holpen, being strengthened by her health-giving sway. For this reason, therefore, the figure of the serpent is attached to the statues of both deities, because they bring it about that our bodies strip off, as it were, the slough of their maladies, and are restored to their pristine vigour, just as serpents renew their youth every year, by casting off the slough of old age. And the figure of the serpent is explained as an emblem of the Sun himself for the reason that the Sun is perpetually returning out of, as it were, the old age of his lowest setting, up to his full meridian height as if to the vigour of youth. Moreover, that the dragon is one of the chiefest emblems of the Sun, is manifest from the derivation of the name, it being so called from δέρκειν, 'to see.' For they teach that this serpent, by his extremely acute and never-sleeping sight, typifies the nature of the luminary; and on this account the guardianship of temples, shrines, oracles, and treasures is assigned to dragons. That Aesculapius is the same with Apollo is further proved by this fact, not merely that he is reputed the son of the latter, but because he also is invested with the privilege of divination. For Apollodorus, in his Treatise on Theology, lays down that Aesculapius presides over augury and oracles. And no wonder; seeing that the sciences of medicine and of divination are cognate sciences: for medicine predicts the changes for good or ill about to succeed in the human body. As Hippocrates hath it, the physician should be competent to predicate of his patient 'both his present, his past and future condition,' which is the same thing as divination which foreknows, as Homer says,

> 'The things that be, that shall be, and that were.'"

It has been already stated how, in the Mithraic worship, the image, surrounded from foot to head by the spiral convolutions of the serpent, had become the established emblem of the deity himself. The incidental remark in the above citation, that the

* Or in modern scientific phrase, *Aesculapius* is but another name for *electricity*.

flexuous motion of the reptile represented to the Egyptians, the annual course of the sun, affords the sufficient reason why his image should be thus encircled by so significant an attribute. Taking therefore into account the fact that the disputed symbol we are considering was by its nature primarily confined to talismans designed for medical agents, there is at once sufficient reason to suppose it connected with the worship of Aesculapius; and secondly, as it always appears in such cases in company with the Agathodæmon, the undoubted emblem of the Solar god, it may be inferred to be either a symbol or a hieroglyphical representation in little of the same type. In other words, the *figure* signifies nothing more than a serpent-entwined wand, and its *sense* only contains an allusion to the principal visible manifestation of the nature of the Sun. But this point must be left for fuller examination in its connexion with the hitherto unexplained Sigil which invariably makes its appearance on the reverse of the Chnuphis talismans, and which therefore must have been regarded as an essential element in their potency.

Fig. 8.

DEATH, AS DEPICTED IN ANCIENT ART.

The King of the Shades has formed the subject of the preceding investigation. The natural sequence of ideas requires us to consider by what visible form ancient imagination expressed the direct agency of his power, and represented to the eye the unwelcome apparition of the "Satelles Orci."

Mingling among the Cupids, whether sculptured or glyptic, and easy to be mistaken for one of the sportive group by the casual observer, comes the most popular antique embodiment of what to our notions is the most discordant of all ideas. He can only be distinguished from the God of Love by observing his pensive attitude; his action of extinguishing his torch either by striking the blazing end against the ground or by trampling it out with the foot; otherwise he leans upon it inverted, with folded wings, and arms and legs crossed in the attitude of profound repose. At other times he is divested of wings, to typify the end of all movement, and whilst he quenches his torch with one hand, he holds *behind* him with the other the large hoop, *annus* (which the Grecian Ἐνίαυτος carries *before* him), to signify that for his victim no more shall the year roll on.

To understand how so charming a type came to be appropriated to such a signification, it is necessary to cast off modern associations, and to recollect that to the ancient mind, arguing merely from the analogy of Nature, death presented itself as merely the necessary converse of birth, and consequently carried no terror in the thought—"nullique ea tristis imago," as Statius happily words it. For it implied nothing worse than the return to the state of unconsciousness, such as was before Being commenced; or, as Pliny clearly puts the case, "Unto all the state of being after the *last* day as the same as it was before the *first* day of life; neither is there any more sensation in

either body or soul after death than there was before life." On this account the mere return, as Byron hath it—

> "To be the nothing that I was,
> Ere born to life and living woe,"

inspired no fears beyond those springing from the natural instinct of self-preservation. Many carried this indifference to the opposite extreme—exemplified in the trite story of the Thracians lamenting on the occasion of a birth, and rejoicing on that of a death in the family. Pliny boldly declares that the greatest favour Nature has bestowed on man is the shortness of his span of life; whilst the later Platonists, as seen in that curious chapter of Macrobius, "On the descent of the Soul," termed the being born into this world "spiritual death," and dying, "spiritual birth." But after the ancient order of ideas had been totally revolutionised—when the death of the body came to be looked upon as the punishment of Original Sin, and as the *infraction*, not the *fulfilment* of a natural law—the notion necessarily assumed a more horrific aspect; which again was exaggerated to the utmost of their power by the new teachers, for it supplied them with the most potent of all engines for the subjugation of the human soul—"Æternas quoniam pœnas in morte timendum." The ancient type, therefore, which implied nothing but peace and unbroken repose, was therefore at once discarded, as totally inconsistent with the altered view of the reality. Add to this the fact that everything in the shape of Cupid had been forcibly enrolled amongst the Cherubim and Seraphim, and had thereby received a character yet more foreign to that of the newly-created King of Terrors.

Hence the Christians were driven to seek in the ancient iconology for a more fitting representation of the offspring and avenger of transgression—something that should be equally ghastly and terror-inspiring—and such a representative they found made to their hand in the former way of picturing a *Larva*, or bad man's ghost. This had always been depicted as a *skeleton*, and such a figure was recommended by old association to their minds in the times when (as Böttiger phrases it) "the Christians creeping forth out of their catacombs

substituted for the Genius with inverted torch, the skulls and mouldering bones of their own martyrs." And that the *larva* was popularly imagined in a skeleton form, appears, amongst the rest, from Ovid's line in his 'Ibis'—

> "Insequar atque oculos *ossea* larva tuos."
> "Where'er thou turn'st my injured shade shall rise,
> And flit, a fleshless ghost before thine eyes."

Seneca also laughs at the vulgar notion of "larva-forms, frames of bare bones hanging together;" and Trimalchio, at his famous dinner, in order to promote conviviality, throws down upon the table a silver larva, so ingeniously made as to bound about on the board with every limb quivering, whilst the host hiccups out the admonition—

> "Heu, Heu, nos miseros, quam totus homuncio nil est,
> Sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet Orcus
> Ergo vivamus dum licet esse bene."

Such a larva sometimes makes his appearance on the gem, introduced there for the same purpose—to remind his wearer of the shortness of life, and the wisdom of making the best use of the portion allotted to him—speaking, mutely, the words of Virgil's 'Copa Syrisca'—

> "Pone merum et talos, pereat qui crastina curat!
> Mors aurem vellens; Vivite, ait, venio."

Thus upon one gem we behold him holding forth in his bony hand the *lecythus* (long, pointed vase of oil), that regularly accompanied every Greek interment, whilst he leans with his elbow against a huge *amphora* of wine, as though recommending the enjoyment of its contents whilst yet in one's power.* Another, a more fanciful composition, depicts Cupid casting the light of his torch into the depths of an immense Corinthian *crater* out of which a skeleton is throwing himself headlong, as though scared away by the hateful glare—a design whose abstruse meaning may perhaps be interpreted by the foregoing

* Exactly the same lesson is taught by a drinking-cup in the Orléans Museum, the decoration of which is a dance of skeletons. (Mém. Soc. Antiq. de France, vol. xxxi.)

remarks ('Impronte Gemmarie,' ii. 10, 11).* A skeleton, likewise, was often painted on the wall of tombs; for example, in that pathetic scene at Pompeii, where a mother is represented laying a mortuary fillet over the bones of her child. In all these cases the form is merely intended to symbolise the *condition* of death by placing before the eye the body as deserted by life, reduced to the state most expressive of mortality and decay, and which cannot be mistaken for one of sleep. But it is easy to perceive how ready was the transition from the hieroglyph of mortality regarded as a *state* (especially when to the popular mind the figure also represented a restless and malignant spiritual being) to the adoption of the same inauspicious shape for the embodiment of the idea of the actual principle of destruction.

But to return to antique imagery of the same sense. The idea of death is ingeniously and curiously expressed in a fresco decorating the lately discovered vault of Vincentius and Vibia, in the Catacombs of Prætextatus, Rome. In the scene labelled "abreptio Vibie et Discensio," the messenger of Fate, "Mercurius," appears placing one foot and leading the way into a huge *urn* laid sideways on the ground. The allusion to *Orcus* in the name of such a vessel, *orca*, is sufficiently obvious, and in fact both may spring from the same root, ἕρκος, *inclosure*, *prison*. But the most common type, perpetually repeated on sarcophagi and tablets, is the *Horse*, significant of departure, looking in through the window upon a party carousing—life's festive scene. Yet more forcibly is the same notion carried out in an Etruscan sculpture (figured in the Revue Archéologique, 1844), where the angel of death, *Charun*, armed as usual with his ponderous mall, actually leads this horse upon which sits the deceased with head muffled up, "capite obnupto"—the established form in sentencing a criminal to execution. The same reason, probably, made the horse's head

* Such a larva also points the moral of the scene embossed upon a lamp, published by De Witte (Mem. Soc. Antiq. de France, 1871), where a philosopher seated, and grasping a scroll, is apostrophising a skeleton standing before him; at his feet lies an infant in swaddling-clothes. These adjuncts declare the subject of the philosopher's meditations—the destiny of Man from birth to death.

so popular a subject for signet-gems; it served there for a *memento-mori*, like the death's heads so much in vogue amongst the jewels of the Cinque-cento time, although the antique symbol carried with it a widely different admonition. The same notion may possibly lie at the bottom of that immemorial custom in South Wales of the mummers carrying the skull of a horse in their Christmas merry-makings.

Cognate to this is that most ancient representation of the conveyance of the departed soul to the realms of bliss—imagined as some happy island in the far West—upon a fantastic hippocampus, in figure like a winged sea-serpent, and who later became the Roman Capricornus, "Ruler of the Hesperian Wave:"—

> "Thou, for thy rule, O Capricorn! hast won
> All that extends beneath the setting sun,"

as Manilius defines the authority of that amphibious sign. But the original conception is often engraved upon Phœnician scarabic; and no doubt can remain as to its intention, since Caylus has published an Etruscan vase (i. pl. 32) where this same monster is painted joyously careering over the sea, whilst on its other side stands the mourner, *præfica*, chaunting the funeral hymn over the corpse laid out upon its bier of bronze.

To continue within the earliest portion of the subject, it must be observed that in the most ancient monument of Greek sculpture whereof any account remains—the Coffer of Cypselus (executed earlier than 600 B.C.)—*Night* was represented carrying in her arms two children, alike in all respects save colour; the one white, the other black, having their *legs crossed*:* their names being inscribed over them—*Sleep* and *Death*—for their mother was hastening to the aid of the expiring Memnon. Thus it is manifest that from the very dawn of pictorial art the *crossed legs* were the accepted emblem of the most profound repose; whilst the sluggard's wish for "a little more folding of

* διεστραμμένους τοὺς πόδας. The very obvious meaning of these words critics have contrived to misunderstand, and to render as "distorted." Nor is this all; entirely upon the authority of this blunder, Propertius' "somnia *vana*" have been turned into "somnia *vara*," and ever since the whole tribe of Dreams are believed to walk *bandy-legged*.

the hands in slumber" bears the same testimony to the import of the *crossed arms* of the Roman Genius who leans on his inverted torch. In that master-piece of Roman chasing, the Pompeian *discus*, "The Death of Cleopatra," the object of the design is indicated with equal truth and pathos by the placing of the beauteous infant genius at the knee of the dying queen, on which he rests his elbow to form a support for his head as though dropping off into a gentle slumber. The traditional attitude* retained its significancy well understood far down into the Middle Ages: witness so many cross-legged effigies of warriors resting from their toils—who for that sole reason popularly pass for crusaders.

But in the whole long catalogue of emblems, not one expressed the *abstract* idea so definitely as that most frequently employed in such sense—the Gorgon's Head. Accepting the explanation already offered (p. 167), that at its origin this terrific visage was designed for the "vera effigies" of the Queen of the dead, it was the most speaking emblem of her office that could possibly be chosen. In the Heroic ages it was universally *painted*, or embossed upon the warrior's shield; and with the progress of art, cut in cameo, became the regular decoration of the imperial breastplate; † in which post it served, as Lucian remarks ('Philopatris'), "both to terrify enemies and to avert all danger from the wearer," conveying to all beholders the menace of death exactly as now by an undesigned coincidence does the death's head and cross-bones painted upon the pirate's flag. The Byzantines, in the true spirit of their gloomy superstition, discarded the Præ-Italian type for whose beauty they had lost all feeling, and reverted to the image invented by the horror-loving genius of Pelasgic barbarism. They saw in it the most faithful representation of their Μοῖρα, the destroying demon or *ghoul*, still believed by the Greek peasant to haunt

* The child's skeleton in the Pompeian painting above quoted, similarly folds his feet.

† Accipe belligeræ crudum thoraca Minervæ,
Ipsa Meduseæ quam timet ira comæ.
Dum vacat hæc, Cæsar, poterit lorica vocari,
Pectore cum sacro sederit, Ægis erit.
'Mart.' vii. 1.

ruins and desolate places. That the figure was received in such a sense into Byzantine symbolism, the examples of amulets already quoted convincingly declare. From Byzantine the Gorgon passed into Gothic art, which ever revelling in grotesque horror, its inspiring genius being the *skeleton* which intrudes his ghastliness into every mode of ornamentation, even of a mirror-frame (Lucrezia Borgia's for example) contrived to render the image yet more terrible by converting the face into a fleshless skull, and substituting for the hawk's wings lent by Hermes, which previously impelled its flight, the skinny pinions of her own congenial and much-loved fowl, the sepulchre-haunting *bat.*

But of all these emblems, not one is so full of poetry and truth as the device of the *Winged Foot* crushing the Butterfly, Life. The Foot, chosen probably for the same reason as the Horse, as conveying most speakingly the notion of *departure*, was equally accepted as the emblem of death. Horace's simile must occur to every reader:—

> "Pallida Mors æquo pulsat *pede* pauperum tabernas
> Regumque turres."

On this account the Foot became the peculiar attribute of the infernal deities; and the figure of one carved in stone was often dedicated in the temple of Serapis *—apparently as an *ex voto* commemorating the donor's escape from the very threshold of his dark domain. Singularly related to this custom is what Moor notices of the pairs of feet carved in stone commonly seen in the vicinity of Hindoo temples, traditionally said to be memorials of *suttees*, marking the spot whence the devoted widow stepped from earth upon the funeral pile, that is into the Gate of Heaven.

It has long been a question how the Grecian *Hades* ("The Invisible One") and the Roman *Pluto* were depicted in a bodily form as they were originally conceived—for their *Egyptian* equivalent, Serapis, figures much more frequently in

* A colossal example of the finest workmanship was exhumed at Alexandria a few years ago. It may have been contemporary with the coin of Commodus from that mint, which has for reverse a head of Serapis placed upon a foot for pedestal, with the date of his seventh year.

monuments of Imperial date than either of his brethren, Jove or Neptune. In the latter style he is regularly sculptured as *Plutus*, "Lord of Riches," seated on a throne, holding a cornucopia, and extending with his right hand a cluster of earth's choicest gifts. But under what form the primitive Greeks had imagined their Aïdoneus, God of the Shades, before Serapis was introduced into their mythology, is a question that has never been satisfactorily answered. We should have found him on the scarabeus of the Etruscans and early Italiotes, had not a long-enduring respect for things divine (expressly enjoined by Pythagoras) prevented their placing in their signets, used for everyday purposes, the actual figures of the gods, whose absence they supplied by their well-known attributes. For this reason a popular Etruscan seal-device is Cerberus, represented sometimes as a man with three heads of a dog, but more commonly in the shape so familiar to us from later arts. But the Egyptians had contrived to make their Guardian of the Shades much more formidable in aspect by equipping him with the heads of a lion, crocodile, and hippopotamus. We are also certified in what shape the Etruscans imaged their god of the lower world, *Mantus*; for he is painted with serpent legs, like Typhon, wielding a huge butcher's cleaver, and attended by Cerberus, enthroned upon the court placed below the niche of interment, *loculus*, in the Campana tomb, Cervetri.

The "Helmet of Hades" is named by Homer (v. 845), which Pallas puts on in order to render herself invisible to Ares; which *helmet* the scholiast explains by "cloud and invisibility"—whence it seems but natural to infer that, as this deity was rendered *invisible* by his very attribute, no attempt would be made to depict his personal appearance. A figure of a god in long flowing robes, and wielding a trident wanting one of its prongs, sometimes painted on the Nolan vases, has been taken for an Aïdoneus, but on no sufficient grounds, there being better reason to consider him a Poseidon in the archaic style. The epithet "Renowned for horses" is given to the same god elsewhere by Homer (v. 445), allusive doubtless to the *swiftness* of the Destroyer: and in the same title may, perchance, lie the motive which made the Greeks adopt the *horse*, as above noticed,

for the commonest symbol of his power. If we could meet with any genuine antique and *early* representation of the Rape of Proserpine it would at once decide the question by portraying the grim Ravisher himself; but the inauspicious nature of the subject (so conspicuously set forth in Suetonius' anecdote of the ring with the story presented by Sporus to Nero for a New Year's gift) has completely excluded it from the artist's repertory, so far as anything now remaining informs us. Stosch's Collection, amongst its immense varity of mythological designs, contains nothing of the sort, whilst Raspe gives for its representative only a single antique paste (and that, too, of very dubious attribution) where a god with quiver on shoulder is carrying off a Nymph in a car drawn by two swans—attributes properly bespeaking an Apollo; and if really given here to Pluto, proving the work to belong to those latter times of Paganism when Hades, Serapis, Phœbus, were equally interpreted as mere titles of the Solar god.

As for the Roman Pluto, or, to give him his native name, *Dis* (*ditis*, from the same root as *death*), there was the best of reasons for excluding him from the province of art which admitted nought that was hideous or of evil augury. For there can be no doubt, that, to the popular imagination, he still continued the *Charun*,* whom we still behold lording it over the sepulchres of their Etruscan teachers in the arts, a giant of horrid aspect with pointed ears, and tusky grinning jaws, winged buskins on legs, extending with one hand a hissing serpent, with the other wielding a monstrous mall. It was probably the traditional influence of the idea that caused the same instrument, *mazza*, to be retained at Rome for the execution of peculiarly atrocious criminals down to the recent introduction of the guillotine.

That Pluto was really so personified in the shows of the Amphitheatre, as late as the third century, may be gathered from the remark of Tertullian (Apol. xxv.), that, "amongst the other scenic cruelties of the afternoon, the spectators laughed at the sight of Mercury raising the dead with his *red-hot* wand [applied doubtless to the feet of the slaughtered gladiators to

* As Etruria was the only school of art for Rome until very late times, she supplied the *figures* equally with the *names* of all the Roman deities.

ascertain if life still lingered within them]; whilst the 'Brother of Jupiter,' armed with his *mall*, escorted the dead bodies of the combatant" [for the purpose clearly of giving them the *coup de grâce*]. The primitive Etruscan image passed down into the belief of their mediæval descendants, for Dante brings on the stage :—

"Charon, demonio con occhi di bragia."
"*Charon, a devil with live-coals for eyes.*"

It is time now to dismiss the Lord of the Shades, and to consider by what *Emblem* ancient art sought to express the *Shade* itself, the disembodied spirit. The Greeks of early times appropriately painted it in the shape of a *bird* with a human head, as on that beautiful vase, "The Death of Procris" (British Museum), where such a fowl is conspicuously seen winging its flight from the mouth of the wounded Nymph. The celebrated Orléans (now Russian) scarabeus, engraved with the "Death of Achilles," has its back carved into the same creature, tearing her breast in an agony of despair. This expressive type was not, however, the birth of Grecian genius, but adopted, without alteration, from the most ancient symbolism of Egypt. In the "Judgment of the body and soul," regularly painted on the mummy-cases, the former, depicted as a mummy, stands before Osiris, "Lord of the West," to answer for its *actions;* whilst the soul, in shape of a hawk, with human head and wings uplifted, is brought before the same god under another form, to give an account of its *thoughts.* And the same soul, purified, and admitted amongst the gods, appears as before, but tranquilly standing with a golden disk, "a crown of glory," set upon her head: figures of the last kind in bronze frequently occurring amongst Egyptian remains, complimentary mementoes of deceased friends. Again, this same bird is often found painted on the mummy-case right over the *heart* (named in Coptic, "the abode of the soul"), a plain proof of what it signifies there; although Father Kircher, with his wonted extravagance, chose to explain it as figuring the *iynx*, the bird so renowned in the magical operations of the Greeks. Again, the same notion is expressed by the simple figure of a bird flying away, as often is done in Etruscan works, where the subject represented is the

death of a hero. Latest of all, this somewhat grotesque Egyptian conception was modified by Grecian culture into the graceful girl with butterfly wings—the well-known Psyche—and such a form is seen seated upon the summit of Achilles' tomb, before which the sacrifice of Polyxena is about to be offered. This ancient human-headed Bird, by a natural transition of ideas, came ultimately to be applied to express a widely different meaning. Instead of the *dead*, it was made to stand for the *destroyer;* and the Syrens are always painted in this shape whenever their interview with Ulysses becomes the theme of ancient art, or when they engage in their unlucky contest with the Muses. But here, for the sake of more grace, in the conformation of the monster, the whole of the female bust is adapted to the body of the fowl. Despite their beauty and melodiousness, the Syrens were considered as the most malignant and destructive of beings, for which reason the *Harpies* likewise were depicted in precisely the same figure. Although identical at first, the more refining art of Roman times introduced a distinction between them by giving to the Syrens the complete *bust*, to the Harpies the *head* only of the woman. Inasmuch as the name signifies "Snatcher-away," the Harpy was understood to embody the abstract idea of death, which acceptation explains why she is often represented armed with a sword, or carrying on her shoulder the funeral *lecythus*, and torch. For the same reason the Harpy holds a conspicuous place in the decorations of many ancient tombs, unlesss, indeed, the emblem may have been used there in its Egyptian sense.

In what shape Death was personified by Euripides, in his Alcestis, cannot be made out from the insufficiency of data afforded by the lines relating to his appearance on the stage. It is, however, plain that the poet brought forward Θάνατος in a bodily form, perhaps considering him the same with Aïdoneus, for he styles him "King of the Dead;" and Macrobius, speaking of the same event, uses for his name the Roman equivalent, "Orcus." All that can be gathered from the incidental allusions of the other *dramatis personæ* to this apparition, is that he was robed in *black*, and carried a *sword*, wherewith to sever a lock from the head of his destined victim, and so devote it to

the subterranean gods. It is, however, possible that Euripides brought on this Θάνατος in that harpy shape which sometimes is found in antique art where the bust is that of a grim aged man, in place of the smiling female's, and who, as badge of office, carries a naked *sword.* In such a form the Destroyer must have flitted before the eyes of Statius, when about to make prey of the young and beautiful Glaucius :—

"Subitas inimica levavit
Parca manus; quo diva feros gravis exuis *ungues?*"

This last word can apply to nothing but the Harpy, of whom *claws* were the distinctive attribute :—

"*Unguibus* ire parat nummos raptura Celæno." *

Nevertheless, a representation like this had in it nothing grotesque or offensive to the Athenian eye. Far different was the Pelasgic Κῆρ, likewise *robed in black* (according to Homer's normal epithet for her), in the form which the archaic sculptor had given her upon the Coffer of Cypselus, "having tusks as fierce as those of any wild beast." Such a conception was eagerly embraced by the gloomy genius of the Etruscans, ever delighting in the monstrous and the horrible. She therefore figures on their signets in a form to be described in the very words of Pausanias, having a huge Gorgonian head, grinning jaws, arms wreathed with serpents, impelled by quadruple wings, like an Assyrian deity, and her action that of furious haste. So, doubtless, appeared the Furies, brought on the stage by Æschylus, when the horror of their strange aspect struck the Athenian audience with such deadly fright. For his purpose he must have revived a very ancient and *forgotten* type of the idea, for the paintings on the vases of his epoch exhibit the Eumenides, who persecute Orestes, under a no more terrific form than as shadowy old women brandishing serpents and torches, as they chase their victim from shrine to shrine.

* The same picture must have been in Horace's mind when he uses the figure . . . .

"Mors atris circumvolat alis."

TOMB-TREASURES.

Serapis, in his double character of God of Death and God of Riches, has been the subject of preceding chapters; the present one shall be devoted to the consideration of the most striking method by which human superstition sought to turn to account the two ideas. To propitiate the *Manes* by placing his most valuable or beloved effects in the sepulchre of the defunct, dates probably from the very institution of interment; but the account now to be cited is the most interesting of any on record, owing to the circumstances of the time, person, and place. It is literally translated from the description of an eye witness, the earliest of Italian antiquaries, M. L. Fauno, given in his 'Antichita de Roma,' p. 154, published 1553.

"In February, 1544, in the Chapel of the King of France, which is now being built in St. Peter's, after the plan of Julius II., the workmen, in excavating, came upon a marble coffin, which, from the things found therein, was clearly known to be the tomb of Maria, wife of the Emperor Honorius. Of the body, indeed, there was nothing left, except the teeth, the hair, and the two leg-bones. From the robes which were interwoven with gold, and from the head-tire, which was cloth of silk and gold, there was extracted by smelting more than *forty* pounds weight of the purest gold." [Suecius says *thirty-six*, but makes the total of all the gold found to amount to the above weight when they were melted down by order of Paul III., to be applied to the building fund of the Cathedral.]

"Within the coffin lay a silver box, one and a half foot long by eight inches deep, with many articles inside, the which we shall proceed particularly to describe. There were vases and different things in rock crystal, thirty in all, big and little; amongst which were two cups, as it were, not very large, the one round, the other oval shaped, with most beautiful figures in intaglio of middling depth (*mezzo-cavo*), and a *snail-shell* (nautilus), likewise in crystal, fitted up for a lamp in fine gold, with which in the first place the mouth of the shell is overlaid, there being only left a hole for pouring in the oil; by the side

of which hole is fixed a *fly* of gold upon a pivot, turning backwards and forwards, for the purpose of closing the orifice. In the same way is also made a nozzle with beak (*pippio*) for holding the wick, drawn out long and sharpened with the greatest elegance, and so fastened to the crystal that it appears all one piece naturally. The cover also is equally well made. The shape of the shell is that of a great sea-shell, encompassed all round with its points, which in this vessel are polished and very smooth, so excellently wrought is the crystal. There were also vases and various articles in agate, with certain little animals, eight in all, and amongst them two very beautiful vases, one like the glass *ampullae*, made big and squat for holding oil and such like liquids, so worked, so beautiful, and thin that it is a wonder to behold. The other is in the shape of those ladles with long handles used at Rome for baling water out of cisterns, and is supposed to be a vessel used by the ancients in their sacrifices [a *ligula* for the purpose of ladling the wine out of the great standing *crater*]. Next came four little vessels in gold of different kinds, and another little vessel of gold with a cover set round with jewels. A little gold heart that had been a pendant with jewels set in it; a buckle of gold with six gems of different kinds set in it, also twenty-four other buckles of gold of various patterns with little gems set in them; furthermore, forty-eight rings and *hoops** of gold of different shapes, one of them in red bone, and various gems. A mouse in "chelidonia," a reddish quartz, is also specified by Suecius [which must be the next item], also three little animals in *red bone*; also two ear-drops in emerald or plasma with two jacinths; four small crosses with red and green stones; a pendant in the form of a bunch of grapes, made of purple stones; eight other little gold pendants of different sorts with gems set in them. The remains of a string of *crepundia*, the usual decoration of little children. [Maria had died at the age of *four*, being thus early betrothed to Honorius by his father the all-powerful Stilicho]. Three little gold crosses set with emeralds; a piece of a small fine necklace with certain green

* *Verghe:* "verga," like the French verge, signifies a plain gold wire forming a ring having no head.

stones strung upon it. Another little gold necklace with twenty-four beads of plasma. Another necklace with twelve heads of sapphire cut almond shape. Another little necklace of gold wire folded up (*raccolto*), but broken into four pieces. Two small buttons in gold; fourteen little gold-wire rings like those of a coat of mail; three more crosses with some emeralds, and a round gold plate like an Agnus Dei,* with these words upon it, STILICHO VIVAT. Two bracelets (*maniche*) of gold, set with certain red and green stones. Two large pins or *stiletti* for the hair, one in gold nearly a palm (nine inches) long inscribed with these words, DOMINVS HONORIVS DOMINA MARIA: the other in silver without inscription. There were likewise many fragments of enamels and other stones. Also silver nails [their heads] partly flat, partly in relief, which had fastened down a cover of silver upon a little coffer. Also a small plate of gold with these words written or rather *scratched* in Greek, MICHAEL· GABRIEL· RAPHAEL· VRIEL·" [Laurentius Surius makes out *forty* gold rings set with precious stones, besides an emerald set in gold, engraved with a head supposed to be that of Honorius, which was valued at five hundred gold ducats]. We have particularly described all the above-named objects because Claudian, a poet of those times, declares that to the Empress Maria were sent similar rare presents from her betrothed; which perhaps may have formed the greatest part of these things. The words of the poet are—

> "Jam munera nuptæ
> Præparat, et pulchros Mariæ sed luce minores
> Elicit ornatus: quidquid venerabilis olim
> Livia, divorumque nurus gessere superbæ." (x. 10–13.)

This account enables us to form some notion of the treasures deposited to a greater or less degree in all the tombs of important personages, but more especially in those sumptuous structures raised to the memory of the dead throughout Asia Minor. The same fact sufficiently accounts for the furious onslaught made upon the tombs all over the Roman world, so soon as the change of religion had extinguished the old veneration for the *Manes* and the things consecrated to them—a profanation, and a

* A disk of stamped wax about three inches in diameter.

destruction of works of art, which Gregorius Theologus, inspired by a taste and good feeling very surprising in a Byzantine saint, has attacked in one hundred and eighty-two very interesting and often poetical epigrams.

The same custom was kept up (although we can hardly suppose with any lingering belief in its ancient efficiency) by the Merovingian and Carlovingian successors to the wealth of the Western Empire. The learned Canon Chiflet has left in his interesting book, 'Anastasis Childerici Regis,' a complete history of tomb-treasures, serving to illustrate his account of that of Childeric the Frank, accidentally found in the precincts of Tournay Cathedral, May 1654. The deposit, as far it could be recovered from the first finders, consisted of the arms of the king, the trappings of his horse (buried with him), all of gold encrusted with garnets, his gold tablets and writing-stylus, abundance of golden-bees originally stretched over his mantle (which gave that curious idea to Napoleon I.), a bull's head for a pendant (the primitive Frankish badge of sovereignty), and lastly, a *viaticum* in the shape of one hundred Byzantine *solidi* of contemporary emperors, and as many denarii of several and much earlier Cæsars. The canon, by zealous perquisitions, succeeded in recovering all these articles, including the most important of all, the royal signet ring of massy gold, engraved with the image and superscription of Childeric, for his patron the Archduke Leopold, then governor of the Low Countries. At some subsequent period the most important of these relics passed into the collection of the Bibliothèque Impériale, where they continued in all due honour until the disastrous robbery of 1808, when it is supposed, with too much probability, that they were melted down along with the rest of the booty!

Fig. 9.

GNOSTIC CONNECTION WITH SUPERSTITIOUS PRACTICES.

I. The Evil Eye.

Serapis we have seen, in one of his representations lately noticed, specially invoked to defend his votary against the *Evil Eye* under its abstract title of φθόνος. A glance therefore at this most ancient superstition (which still flourishes in full vigour in the same countries that gave it birth) will form a fitting prelude to the coming section, which takes for subject talismans and amulets of every class.

The belief in the power for mischief of the eye of an envious or malignant person (to counteract which was the principal object of so many of the amulets that have come down to us) was universal amongst all ancient nations. It is needless to bring forward classic writers to support this statement; such as Apollonius Rhodius, where he skilfully avails himself of the notion, and makes Medea by her basilisk glance alone work the death of Talas, the Brazen Man, guardian of the Cretan shores; for even St. Paul (Rom. i. 29) sets down this action of the soul working through the eye in the list of sins of the deepest dye. But the actual *manner* of operation upon the sufferer I have nowhere found explained except in the following passage from Heliodorus ('Æthiopica,' iii. 8), and which therefore deserves to be inserted at length in this prelude to the subject. "Tell me, my good Calasiris, what is the malady that has attacked your daughter?" "You ought not to be surprised," I replied, "if at the time when she was heading the procession in the sight of so vast an assemblage of people, she had drawn upon herself some *envious eye*." Whereupon, smiling ironically, "Do you then," asked he, "like the vulgar in general, believe in the reality of such fascination?" "As much as I do in any other fact," I replied, "and the thing is this: the air which surrounds us passing through the eyes, as it were through a strainer, and

also through the mouth, the teeth and the other passages, into the inward parts, whilst its external properties make their way in together with it—whatever be its quality as it flows in, of the same nature is the effect it disseminates in the recipient, so that when any one looks upon beauty with envy, he fills the circumambient air with a malignant property, and diffuses upon his neighbour the breath issuing from himself, all impregnated with bitterness, and *this*, being as it is of a most subtile nature, penetrates through into the very bone and marrow. Hence envy has frequently turned itself into a regular disease, and has received the distinctive appellation of *fascination* (*βασκανία*). Consider also, my Charicles, how many people have been infected with ophthalmia, how many with other pestilential diseases, not from any contact with those so affected, or from sharing the same bed or same table, but merely from breathing the same air. Let also (and above all the rest), the origin of love be a support to my argument, for *that* owes its first origin to the sight which shoots like arrows the passion into the soul. And for this there is very good reason, for of all the senses and passages of the body, the sight is the most easily excited, and the most inflammable, and consequently the most susceptible with regard to external emanation, in consequence of its own natural fiery essence, attracting to itself the visits of love. And if you wish for a proof drawn from Natural History, recorded likewise in the Sacred Books, the bird, the yellow-hammer, cures the jaundice, and if a person so affected shall but look at that bird, the latter at once tries to escape and shuts its eyes; not as some think, because it begrudges the benefit to the sick man, but because, if looked upon by men, it is forced by its nature to attract his disease into its own body, like an exhalation, and therefore shuns the glance as much as a blow. And amongst serpents, the basilisk, doth not he, as you may have heard, kill and blast whatever comes in his way by means of his eyes and his breath alone? And if some give the stroke of the Evil Eye even to those they love and are well disposed towards, you must not be surprised, for people of an envious disposition act not as they *wish*, but as their Nature *compels* them to do."

II. On a Ceraunia of Jade Converted into a Gnostic Talisman.

Few relics of antiquity combine in one so many and so widely differing points of interest, with respect to the material, the strangely dissimilar uses to which the same object has been applied in two opposite phases of the history of Man, and, above all, the curious superstitions engendered by its peculiar form, as does the stone brought under the notice of the Archæological Institute by General Lefroy, now in the Woolwich Repository. The kindness of that gentleman having afforded me full opportunity for the careful examination of this interesting monument, I proceed to embody, in as succinct a form as their multifarious nature will permit, the observations suggested to me by that examination.

The subject, therefore, of this section is a small stone celt of the common pattern, but of very uncommon material (in the *antique* class), being made, not of flint, but of dark-green jade or nephrite, 2 in. by 1½ in. in length and greatest width; and brought, there is reason to believe, from Egypt many years ago, by Colonel Milner, aide-de-camp to Lord J. Bathurst during the English occupation of Sicily in 1812. Each of its two faces is occupied by a Gnostic formula, engraved with much neatness, considering the excessive hardness of the material, in the somewhat debased Greek character that was current at Alexandria during the third and fourth centuries of our era.

The most important of these two formulæ has been ingeniously forced to take the outline of a wreath composed of broad leaves, in number *fourteen* (or the sacred *seven* duplicated), and doubtless intended for those of the "Five Trees" that figure so conspicuously in Gnostic symbolism; the ends being tied together with four broad ribbons. This is a design of which no other example has ever come to my knowledge amongst the innumerable and wondrously varied devices excogitated by the prolific fancy of this religion of mysteries. Upon the four ties are engraved in very minute letters different combinations of the seven Greek vowels, whilst each of the

leaves is emblazoned with some "Holy Name," of which many can be easily recognised as constantly recurring in charms of this class; others are disguised by a novel orthography; whilst a few, from the uncertain forms of the lettering, defy all attempts at interpretation.

To the first series belong ΑΒΡΑCΑ, "Abraxas," properly an epithet of the sun, but designating here the Supreme Deity; ΙΑΩΟΥΙΕ, "Iao, Jehovah;" ΑΒΛΑΝΑ, "Thou art our Father!" ΓΑΜΒΡΙΗΛ, a curious mode of spelling "Gabriel," that testifies to the difficulty ever felt by the Greeks of expressing the sound of our B; ΑΚΤΝΟΝΒΩ, which contains the Coptic form of Anubis; ΔΑΜΝΑΜΕΝΕΥC, the sun's name in the famous "Ephesian Spell;" and, most interesting of all, ΠCΑΝΤΑΡΕΟC, who can be no other than the ΙΨΑΝΤΑ of the *Pistis-Sophia*—one of the great Τριδυνάμεις, a Power from whom is enthroned in the planet *Mars*. To the uncertain belong COYMA, probably for COYMAPTA, a name occurring elsewhere, and perhaps cognate to the Hindoo *Sumitri*, ΧΩΝΟΝΙΧΑΡ which may be intended for ΧΑΡ-ΧΝΟΥΜΙC, a common epithet of the Agathodæmon Serpent; ΑΕΙΩΕΗΑΑΝΗC; ΝΕΙΧΑΡΟΠΛΗC; the two last, spells unexplained but very uncommon; ΜΟΝΑΡΧΟC; whilst ΑΧΑΡCΙC and the rest appear here for the first time, if correctly so read.

The other face is covered with an inscription, cut in much larger letters, and in *eight* lines. This number was certainly not the result of chance, but of deep design, for it was mystic in the highest degree, representing—so taught the profoundest doctor of the Gnosis, Marcus—the divine Ogdoad, which was the daughter of the Pythagorean Tetrad, the mother of all creation.* The lines 2, 4, 5, consist of Greek letters used as *numerals*, intermixed with *siglæ*, which, from their constant occurrence upon monuments of a like nature, are supposed, with good reason, to be symbols of the planets. The numerals, on their part, probably denote various deities, for the Alexandrian Gnosis was the true daughter of Magiism; and in the old theology of Chaldea every god and astral genius had a *number* of his own, and which often stands instead of his proper

* St. Hippolytus, Refut. Om. Hæres. vi. 50.

name in dedicatory inscriptions.* Thus, the number of Hoa (Neptune), was 40; of Ana (Pluto), 60; of Bel (Jupiter), 50; of the Sun, 20; of the moon, 30; of the Air, 10; of Nergal (Mars), 12; &c.

A fragment of the *Pistis-Sophia*† supplied the "spiritual man" with a key to the right interpretation of similar stenography in his own creed. "These be the *Names* which I will give unto thee, even from the Infinite One downwards. Write the same with a sign (cypher), so that the sons of God may manifest (understand?) them out of this place. This is the name of the Immortal One, $\overline{\text{AAA}}$ $\overline{\omega\omega\omega}$.‡ And this is the name of the Voice whereby the Perfect Man is moved, $\overline{\text{III}}$. These likewise be the interpretations of the names of the Mysteries. The first is AAA, and the interpretation thereof is ΦΦΦ. The second, which is MMM, or which is ωωω, the interpretation thereof is AAA. The third is ΨΨΨ, the interpretation thereof is OOO. The forth is ΦΦΦ, the interpretation thereof is NNN. The fifth ΔΔΔ, the interpretation thereof is AAA, the which is above the throne of AAA. This is the interpretation of the second AAAA, namely, AAAAAAAA; the same is the interpretation of the whole Name."

Lines 7, 8, are made up of vowels, variously combined, and shrouding from profane eyes the *Ineffable Name* $\text{IA}\overline{\Omega}$ which, as we are informed by many authorities (the most ancient and trustworthy being Diodorus Siculus),§ was the name of the God of the Jews; meaning thereby their mode of writing "Jehovah" in Greek characters.

Line 3 consists of the seven vowels placed in their natural order. This was the most potent of all the spells in the Gnostic repertory; and its importance may justify the extensiveness of the following extract from the grand text-book of this theosophy, which sets forth its hidden sense and wondrous efficacy. The primary idea, however, was far from abstruse, if we accept the statement of the writer "On Interpre-

* On this curious subject, see Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies,' iii. p. 466.

† Cap. 125.

‡ That is, 1000 and 800 tripled. The next numbers are 10,000 tripled, and so on.

§ 'Bibliotheca Historica,' i. 94.

tations," that the Egyptians expressed the name of the Supreme God by the seven vowels thus arranged—ΙΕΗΩΟΥΑ.* But this single mystery was soon refined upon, and made the basis of other and infinitely deeper mysteries. In an inscription found at Miletus (published by Montfaucon), the Holy ΙΕΟΥ-ΑΗΩΑΕΙΟΥΩ is besought "to protect the city of Miletus and all the inhabitants of the same; a plain proof that this interminable combination only expressed the name of some *one* divine being. Again, the *Pistis-Sophia* perpetually brings in ΙΕΟΥ invariably accompanied with the epithet of "the Primal Man," *i.e.*, He after whose image or *type* man was first created. But in the fulness of time the semi-Pythagorean, Marcus, had it revealed unto him that the seven heavens in their revelation sounded each one vowel which, all combined together, formed a single doxology, "the sound whereof being carried down to earth becomes the creator and parent of all things that be on earth."†

The Greek language has but one word for *vowel* and *voice*; when therefore, "the seven thunders uttered their voices," the seven vowels, it is meant, echoed through the vault of heaven, and composed that mystic utterance which the sainted seer was forbidden to reveal unto mortals. "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."‡ With the best reason, then, is the formula inscribed on a talisman of the first class, for hear what the *Pistis-Sophia* delivers touching its potency.§ "After these things his disciples said again unto him, Rabbi, reveal unto us the mysteries of the Light of thy Father, forasmuch as we have heard thee saying that there is another baptism of smoke, and another baptism of the Spirit of Holy Light, and moreover an unction of the Spirit, all which shall bring our souls into the treasurehouse of Light. Declare therefore unto us the mysteries of these things, so that we also may inherit the kingdom of thy Father. Jesus said unto them, Do ye seek after these mysteries? No mystery is more excellent

* This is in fact a very correct representation, if we give each vowel its true Greek sound, of the Hebrew pronunciation of the word Jehovah.

† Hippolytus, vi. 48.

‡ Rev. x. 4.

§ Pistis-Sophia, cap. 378.

than they; which shall bring your souls unto the Light of Lights, unto the place of Truth and Goodness, unto the place of the Holy of holies, unto the place where is neither male nor female, neither form in that place but Light, everlasting, not to be uttered. Nothing therefore is more excellent than the mysteries which ye seek after, saving only the *mystery of the Seven Vowels and their forty and nine Powers*, and the numbers thereof. And no name is more excellent than all these (Vowels),* a Name wherein be contained all Names and all Lights and all Powers. Knowing therefore this Name, if a man shall have departed out of this body of Matter, no smoke (of the bottomless pit), neither any darkness, nor Ruler of the Sphere of Fate,† nor Angel, nor Power, shall be able to hold back the soul that knoweth that Name. But and if, after he shall have departed out of this world, he shall utter that Name unto the fire, it shall be quenched, and the darkness shall flee away. And if he shall utter that Name unto the devils of the Outer Darkness, and to the Powers thereof, they shall all faint away, and their flame shall blaze up, so that they shall cry aloud 'Thou art holy, thou art holy, O Holy One of all holies!' And if he shall utter that Name unto the Takers-away for condemnation, and their Authorities, and all their Powers, nay, even unto Barbelo,‡ and the Invisible God, and the three Triple-powered Gods, so soon as he shall have uttered that Name in those places, they shall all be shaken and thrown one upon the other, so that they shall be ready to melt away and perish, and shall cry aloud, 'O Light of all lights that art in the Boundless Light! remember us also, and purify us!'" After such a revelation as this, we need seek no further for the reason of the frequent occurrence of this formula upon talismans intended, when they had done their duty in this world, to accompany their owner into the tomb, continuing to exert there a protective influence of a yet higher order than in life.

For the student of the mineralogy of the ancients this celt

* Evidently alluding to the collocation of the vowels on our talisman.

† The twelve Æons of the Zodiac, the creators of the human soul, which they eagerly seek to catch when released from the body in which they have imprisoned it.

‡ The divine mother of the Saviour, and one of the three "Invisible Gods," cap. 359.

has very great interest in point of *material*, as being the only specimen of true jade, bearing indisputable marks of either Greek or Roman workmanship, that, so far as my knowledge extends, has ever yet been brought to light. This ancient neglect of the material is truly difficult to explain, if the statement of a very good authority, Corsi, be indeed correct, that the sort showing the deepest green is found in Egypt. The known predilection of the Romans for gems of that colour, would, one should naturally expect, have led them in that case to employ the stone largely in ornamentation, after the constant fashion of the Chinese, and to value it as a harder species of the *Smaragdus*. The circumstances under which this relic was brought to England render it more than probable that Egypt was the place where it was found; a supposition corroborated by the fine quality of the stone exactly agreeing with what Corsi remarks of the Egyptian kind. That *Alexandria* was the place where the inscription was added upon its surface can admit of little question; the lettering being precisely that seen upon innumerable other monuments which can with certainty be assigned to the same grand focus of Gnosticism. In addition to this, it is very doubtful whether in the third or fourth centuries a lapidary could have been found elsewhere throughout the whole Roman Empire capable of engraving with such skill as the minute characters within the wreath evince, upon a material of this, almost insuperable, obduracy. From the times of the Ptolemies down to the Arab conquest, and even later, Alexandria was the seat of the manufacture of vases in rock crystal. This trade served to keep alive the expiring Glyptic art for the only purpose for which its productions continued to be demanded—the manufacture of talismans, consignments of which must have been regularly shipped, together with the crystal-ware,* to Rome, and equally to the other important cities of the empire.

The primitive Egyptians, like the early Chaldeans, used stone in the place of metal for their cutting instruments, and continued its use for making particular articles down into historic times. Herodotus mentions the regular employment of

* "Dum tibi Niliacus portat crystalla cataplus."—Mart. xii. 72.

the "Ethiopian stone" sharpened, for a dissecting-knife* in the process of embalming, and similarly for pointing the arrows† carried by the contingent of the same nation in the army of Xerxes. The Alexandrian citizen, half-Jew half-Greek, who had the good fortune to pick up this primæval implement, doubtless rejoiced in the belief that he had gotten a "stone of virtue," most potent alike from substance, figure, and nature, and therefore proceeded to do his prize due honour by making it the *medium* of his most accredited spells—nay, more, by inventing a new formula of unusual complication and profundity whereby to animate its inherent powers. As regards its *substance,* the stone probably passed then for a *smaragdus* of exceptional magnitude, and that gem, as Pliny records,‡ was recommended by the magi as the proper material for a talisman of prodigious efficacy, which, duly engraved, should baffle witchcraft, give success at court, avert hailstorms, and much more of like nature. The *smaragdus* of the ancients was little more than a generic designation for all stones of a *green* colour, and the entire Gnostic series strikingly demonstrates that this hue was deemed a primary requisite in a talismanic gem—the almost exclusive material of the class being the green jasper and the plasma.

Again, as regards *figure*, this celt offered in its *triangular* outline, that most sacred of all emblems, the mystic Delta, the form that signified maternity, and was the hieroglyph of the moon. This belief is mentioned by Plutarch,§ and explains why the triangle so often accompanies the figure of the sacred baboon, Luna's special attribute, on monuments, where also it is sometimes displayed elevated upon a column with that animal standing before it in the attitude of adoration.

Lastly, the supposed *nature* of this gift of Fortune was not of Earth, inasmuch as it then passed for a holy thing that "had fallen down from Jupiter," being, in fact, nothing less than one of that god's own thunderbolts. A notion this which will

* ii. 86.

† vii. 69.

‡ xxxvii. 40.

§ 'De Iside et Osiride,' cap. 75. He adds that the Pythagoreans called the equilateral triangle "Athene"—a curious confirmation of the tradition quoted by Aristotle, that the Attic goddess was one and the same with the Moon.

doubtless strike the modern mind as so strange, or rather as so preposterous, that it necessitates my giving at full length my reasons for making such an assertion. And in truth the subject is well worth the trouble of investigation, seeing that the same superstition will be found to extend from an early period of antiquity down into the popular belief of our own times throughout a large extent of Europe.

It is in accordance with this notion that I have designated this celt a "ceraunia" (thunderbolt-stone), and it therefore remains for me to adduce my reasons for giving it what must appear to most people so unaccountable and highly inappropriate an appellation. *Sotacus*, who is quoted elsewhere by Pliny "as one of the most ancient writers on mineralogy," is cited by him* "as making two other kinds of the ceraunia, the black and the red, resembling *axe-heads* in shape. Of these, such as be black and round are sacred things; towns and fleets can be captured by their instrumentality. The latter are called *Bætyli*, whilst the oblong sort are the *Ceraunia*. Some make out another kind, in mighty request in the practices of the magi, inasmuch as it is only to be found in places that have been struck by lightning." One would have been utterly at a loss to understand what the old Greek had been speaking about in the chapter thus confusedly condensed by the later Roman naturalist, or to discover any resemblance in form between the lightning-flash and an axe-head, had it not been for the popular superstition that has prevailed in Germany from time immemorial to the present day, and of which full particulars are given by Anselmus Boëtius in his invaluable repertory of mediæval lore upon all such matters, written at the beginning of the seventeenth century.†

Under the popular names of "Strahl-hammer," "Donner-pfeil," "Donner-keil," "Strahl-pfeil," "Strahl-keil" (lightning-hammer, thunder-arrow or club, lightning-arrow, &c.), and the Italian "Sagitta,"‡ he figures stone celts and hammers of five

* xxxvii. 51.

† 'Gem. et Lapid. Hist.' ii. cap. 261.

‡ "Saetta" (a vulgar Italian execration), is now restricted to the lightning-missile, the archer's shaft being expressed by the Teutonic "freccia," in accordance with the genius of the language which reserves the old Latin terms for the things

different, but all common, types; remarking that so firm was the belief in these things being the "actual arrow of the lightning" (ipsa fulminis sagitta), that should any one attempt to controvert it he would be taken for a madman. He however confesses with amusing simplicity that the substance of these thunderbolts is exceedingly like the common flint used for striking fire with; nay, more, he boldly declares he should agree with those few *rationalists* who, on the strength of their resemblance in shape to the tools in common use, pronounced these objects to be merely ordinary iron implements that had got *petrified* by long continuance in the earth, had it not been for the testimony of the most respectable witnesses as to the fact of their being discovered in places just seen to be struck with lightning. Besides quoting some fully detailed instances from Gesner, he adds that several persons had assured him of having themselves seen these stones dug up in places where the lightning had fallen. The natural philosophers of the day accounted for the creation of such substances in the atmosphere by supposing the existence of a vapour charged with sulphureous and metallic particles, which rising above a certain height became condensed through the extreme heat of the sun, and assumed a wedge-like form in consequence of the escape of their moisture, and the gravitation of the heavier particles towards their lower end! Notwithstanding this celestial origin, the virtue of the production was not then esteemed of a proportionally sublime order, extending no further than to the prevention or the cure of ruptures in children, if placed upon their cradles; and also to the procuring of sleep in the case of adults. In our own times Justinus Kerner mentions* the same names for stone celts as universally popular amongst the German boors; but they are now chiefly valued for their efficacy in preserving cattle from the murrain, and consequently the finders can seldom be induced to part with them.

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not of this world,—using those of the *lingua militaris* for every-day purposes. The flint arrow-heads found in the *terra marna* of the primæval Umbrian towns, are believed by the peasantry to have this celestial origin, and are highly valued as portable "light-conductors."

* In his little treatise on Amulets.

It must not, however, be supposed that Sotacus picked up this strange notion from the Teutones of his own age, whose very existence was probably unknown to him; his informants were unquestionably those magi cited at the conclusion of Pliny's extract. The Greek mineralogist had lived "apud Regem," that is, at the court of the King of Persia, very probably in the capacity of royal physician, like his countrymen Democedes and Ctesias. In that region he had ample opportunities of seeing stone celts, for Rawlinson observes * that flint axes and other implements, exactly identical with the European in workmanship, are *common* in all the most ancient mounds of Chaldæa, those sites of primæval cities. Such elevations above the dead level of those interminable plains were necessarily the most liable to be lightning-struck; and hence probably arose the idea that these weird-looking stones (all tradition of whose proper destination had long since died out amongst the iron-using Persians) were the actual fiery bolts which had been seen to bury themselves in the clay. And again, to revert to the German belief, it must be remembered that Thor, the Northern Jupiter, is pictured as armed with a huge hammer in the place of the classical thunderbolt. The type of the god had been conceived in the far-remote ages when the stone-hammer was as yet the most effective and formidable of weapons, and was preserved unchanged out of deference to antiquity, after the true meaning of the attribute was entirely forgotten. Nevertheless, his worshippers, accustomed to behold the hammer in the hand of the god of thunder,—ὑψιβρεμέτης Ζεύς,—very naturally concluded that these strange objects, of unknown use, found from time to time deep buried in the earth, were the actual missiles which that deity had discharged. It is a remarkable proof of the wide diffusion of the same belief, that the late owner of the relic under consideration, habitually spoke of it as a "thunderstone,"—a name he could only have learnt from the Arabs from whom it was procured, seeing that no such notion with respect to *celts* has ever been current in this country. But every one whose memory reaches back forty years or more may recollect, that wheresoever in England the

* 'Ancient Monarchies,' i. p. 120.

fossil *Belemnite* is to be found, it was implicitly received by all, except the few pioneers of Geology (a word then almost synonymous with Atheism), as the veritable thunderbolt shot from the clouds, and by that appellation was it universally known. I, for one, can recollect stories, quite as respectably attested as those Boëtius quotes concerning the *Ceraunixæ*, told respecting the discovery of new fallen belemnites under precisely the same circumstances; and, in truth, the same author does in the preceding chapter treat at length of the *Belemnites*, and his cuts show that the name meant then what it does at present; but he assigns to the missile an infernal instead of a celestial source, giving the vulgar title for it as "Alpschoss," (elfin-shot,) which he classically renders into "dart of the Incubus," stating further that it was esteemed (on the good old principle, "similia similibus curantur") of mighty efficacy to guard the sleeper from the visits of that much dreaded nocturnal demon. The Prussian, Saxon, and Spanish physicians employed it, powdered, as equally efficacious with the *lapis Judaicus*, in the treatment of the calculus. It was also believed a specific for the pleurisy in virtue of its *pointed* figure, which was analogous to the *sharp* pains of that disease, for so taught the universally accepted "Doctrine of Signatures."

The *Ceraunixæ* of Sotacus, however, comprised, besides these primitive manufactures of man, other substances, it is hard to say whether meteorites or fossils; the nature of which remains to be discussed. Photius,* after quoting the paragraph, "I beheld the *Bætylus* moving through the air, and sometimes wrapped up in vestments, sometimes carried in the hands of the ministers," proceeds to give a summary of the wondrous tale told by the discoverer of the prodigy—one Eusebius of Emesa. He related how that, being seized one night with a sudden and unaccountable desire to visit a very ancient temple of Minerva, situated upon a mountain at some distance from the city, he started off, and arriving at the foot, sat down to rest himself. Suddenly he beheld a globe of fire fall down from heaven, and a monstrous lion standing by the same, but who

* 'Bibliotheca,' 1063, R.

immediately vanished. Running to pick it up as soon as the fire was extinguished, he found this self-same *Bætylus.* Inquiring of it to what god it belonged, the thing made answer that he came from the Noble One (so was called a figure of a lion standing in the temple at Heliopolis). Eusebius thereupon ran home with his prize, a distance of 210 stadia (26 miles), without once stopping, being quite unable to control the *impetus* of the stone! He described it as "of a whitish colour, a perfect sphere, a span in diameter, but sometimes assuming a purple* shade, and also expanding and contracting its dimensions, and having letters painted on it in cinnabar, of which he gave the interpretation. The stone, likewise, if struck against the wall, returned answers to consultors in a low whistling voice." The grain of truth in this huge heap of lies is obviously enough the fact that Eusebius, having had the good fortune to witness the descent of a meteorite, and to get possession of the same, told all these fables about it in order to increase the credit of the oracular stone (which doubtless brought him in many fees) amongst his credulous townsfolk. Damascius† (whose Life of Isidorus Photius is here being epitomised) adds, that this philosopher was of opinion that the stone was the abode of a spirit, though not one of the mischievous or unclean sort, nor yet one of a perfectly immaterial nature. He furthermore states that other *bætyli* were known, dedicated to Saturn, Jupiter, and the Sun; and moreover that Isidorus and himself saw many of such *bætyli* or *bætylia* upon Mount Libanus, near Heliopolis in Syria.

As for the derivation of *bætylus*, the one proposed by the Byzantine Hesychius, who makes it come from *bæte*, the goatskin mantle, wherein Rhea wrapped up the stone she gave old Saturn to swallow, instead of the new-born Jove, cannot be considered much more satisfactory than Bochart's, who, like a sound divine, discovers in it a reminiscence of the stone pillar which Jacob set up at Bethel, and piously endeavours to force Sanconiathon, who speaks of the "living" stones, the bæthylia,‡

* The Greek purple included every shade from crimson to violet.

† A stoic philosopher under Justinian.

‡ "Moreover the god Uranus devised *bæthylia*, contriving stones that moved as having life."

to confirm his interpretation by correcting his text into "anointed."

But this last *bætylus* is beyond all question the same thing with that described by the Pseudo-Orpheus,* under the names of *Siderites*, and the *animated Orites*, "round, black, ponderous, and surrounded with deeply-graven furrows." In the first of these epithets may easily be recognized the *ferruginous* character common to all meteorites (*siderites* being also applied to the loadstone), whilst the second (*Orites*) seems to indicate the locality where they most abounded, viz., Mount Lebanon.

Sotacus' notice, indeed, of the efficacy of the *bætylus* in procuring success in seafights and sieges, is copiously illustrated by the succeeding verses of the same mystic poet, who, it must be remembered, can claim a very high antiquity, there being sufficient grounds for identifying him with Onomacritus, a contemporary of Pisistratus, in the sixth century before our era. The diviner Helenus, according to him, had received this oracular stone from Apollo, and he describes the rites, with great minuteness, for the guidance of all subsequent possessors of such a treasure, by means of which the Trojan woke up the spirit within the "vocal sphere." This was effected by dint of thrice seven days' fasting and continence, by incantations and sacrifices offered to the stone, and by bathing, clothing, and nursing it like an infant. Through its aid, when at length rendered instinct with life, the traitorous seer declared to the Atridæ the coming downfall of Troy; the stone uttering its responses in a voice resembling the feeble wail of an infant desiring the breast. It is more than probable that Orphesius in describing the Orites, had in view the *Sālagrāma*, or sacred stone of Vishnu, still employed by the Brahmins in all propitiatory rites, especially in those performed at the death-bed. Sonnerat describes it as "a kind of ammonite, round or oval in shape, black, and very ponderous." The *furrows* covering its surface were traced by Vishnu's own finger; but when found of a violet colour, it is looked upon with horror, as representing a vindictive avatār of the god. The possessor keeps it wrapped up in linen garment like a child, and often bathes

* Λιθικά, 355.

and perfumes it—precisely the rites prescribed by our poet for the due consultation of the oracle of the Siderites.

From all this it may safely be deduced that the "stone of power," whether *bætylus* or *orites*, was in most cases nothing more than a fossil; either a ferruginous nodule, or an echinus filled with iron pyrites. Their being found in abundance in one particular locality, precludes the idea of these at least being meteorites, which latter, besides, never assume any regular form, but look like mere fragments of iron slag. This explanation is strongly supported by the drawings Boetius gives* of what was then called the "Donner-stein," or "Wetter-stein," (thunder, or storm-stone,) and which he very plausibly identifies with Pliny's *Brontias* "that got into the head of the tortoise during thunder-storms," and which is described in another place as the "eye of the Indian tortoise" that conferred the gift of prophecy. His carefully drawn figure of this Donner-stein (which also passed for the "grosser Kroten-stein," bigger toad-stone), shows it to be only a fossil echinus of a more *oblate* form than the common sort. The regular toadstone, plentifully to be seen in mediæval rings, was, on the other hand, the small hollow hemisphere, the fossil tooth of an extinct fish, found in the greensand formation. In that age the Donner-stein was held to possess all the many virtues of the Toadstone, Belemnite, and Ovum Anguinum, in counteracting poison, giving success in all enterprises, procuring sleep, and protection against danger of lightning. But the old physician, so much in advance of his times, cannot help winding up the list of its virtues with the hint, "Fides sæpe veritate major."

The axe-heads and hammer-heads of stone, known to us by the general designation of celts, have, until recent explorations, been regarded as comparatively of rare occurrence amongst ancient relics obtained from Eastern lands and from some other continental countries. Our information, however, in regard to objects of this class has become greatly extended. Mr. James Yates published, in the Archæological Journal, examples of stone celts from Java; an interesting specimen obtained at Sardis is figured, vol. xv. p. 178, and some others

* ii. cap. 264.

were found by Mr. Layard at Nineveh. The occurrence of any ornament or inscription upon such objects is very rare, but amongst numerous stone implements obtained in Greece one is noticed by M. de Mortillet (Matériaux pour l'Histoire primitive de l'Homme, Jan. 1868, p. 9), of which he had received from Athens a drawing and an *estampage*; it is described as "une hache en pierre serpentineuse, sur une des faces de laquelle on a gravé trois personnages et une inscription en caractères grecs. L'ancien outil a évidemment été, beaucoup plus tard, quand on a eu complétement oublié son usage primitif, transformé en talisman ou pierre cabalistique."

At the annual meeting of the Antiquaries of the North, on March 21st, 1853, under the presidency of the late King of Denmark, several recent acquisitions were exhibited, obtained for his private collection at Frederiksborg. Amongst these there was an axe-head of stone (length about 6½ inches), perforated with a hole for the handle, and remarkable as bearing on one of its sides four Runic characters, that appear to have been cut upon the stone at some period more recent than the original use of the implement. It has been figured in the Memoirs of the Society, 1850–1860, p. 28; see also Antiquarisk Tidsskrift, 1852-1854, pp. 258–266. I am indebted to a friend well skilled in Runes and Scandinavian archæology, Dr. Charlton, formerly secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle, for the following observations on this interesting relic.

"The first letter is L, and, if we accept the idea that these were Runes of Victory, it may stand for the initial of Loki; the second is Th, and may stand for Thor; the third O for Odin; the fourth, Belgthor, with a T above it, may refer to Belgthor's friendship and alliance with Thor, and the T stands for Tyr. We may imagine the names of the Northern gods to have been cut on this stone axe to give it victory in battle, just as the old Germans and Saxons cut mystic Runes on their swords, a practice noticed by Haigh in his 'Conquest of Britain by the Saxons,' p. 28, pl. 1, where he has figured amongst various examples of the *futhorc*, or alphabet of Runic characters, one inlaid on a sword or knife found in the Thames, and now in the British Museum. At p. 51, *ibid.* pl. iii. fig. 20, he has cited also the Runic inscription on the silver pommel of

a sword found at Gilton, Kent, formerly in the collection of the late Mr. Rolfe, of Sandwich, and subsequently in the possession of Mr. Joseph Mayer. This relic is now in the precious museum bestowed by his generous encouragement of archæological science on the town of Liverpool. The interpretation given in the latter instance is as follows,—I eke victory to great deeds.*

"There was another explanation given of the characters on the Danish stone axe. It was read—LUTHER. O.—Ludr owns namely, the weapon thus inscribed."

In the ancient Sagas, as remarked in Nilsson's 'Primitive Inhabitants of Scandinavia' (translation by Sir John Lubbock, Bart, p. 214), mention occurs of amulets designated life-stones. victory-stones, &c., which warriors carried about with them in battle to secure victory. A curious relation is cited from one of the Sagas, that King Nidung, when about to engage in conflict, perceived that he had neglected to bring a precious heir-loom, a stone that possessed the virtue of ensuring victory. He offered the hand of his daughter, with a third part of his kingdom, to him who should bring this talisman before the fight commenced; and, having received it, he won the battle. In another narrative, the daughter of a Scanian warrior steals during his slumbers the stone that was hung on his neck, and gave it to her lover, who thus became the victor. Nilsson observes that stones are found in museums, for instance a hammer-stone with a loop, that appear to have been worn thus as talismans in war.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to advert to certain axe-heads of stone, in their general form similar to those with which we are familiar as found in Europe; upon these implements are engraved rude designs, such as the human visage, &c. These objects, of which an example preserved in a museum at Douai has been much cited, may be "victory-stones" of an ancient and primitive people, but they are now recognised as of Carib origin, and not European.

* 'Archæologia,' vol. xxxii. p. 321. A spear-head inscribed with Runes is noticed, 'Journ. Brit. Arch. Ass.,' vol. xxiii. p. 387. There exist certain massive rings of metal inscribed with Runes, that may have been, as some antiquaries suggest, appended to sword-hilts as charms. One of these rings, lately found at Carlisle, is in possession of Mr. Robert Ferguson, of Morton, near that city.

PART III.

ABRAXAS, ABRAXASTER, AND ABRAXOID GEMS.

THE AGATHODÆMON WORSHIP

"THERE was a time" (says M. Matter with much force) "when it was from Judaism, especially from the Kabbala, and the system of Philo, that people sought to derive the great transition of the human mind from the ancient into the modern world: a revolution in which so important a part is played by *Gnosticism.* So far as regards the explanation of the writings and the understanding of the views given by Origen, Irenæus, and the other Fathers upon Gnosticism, the Jewish element still retains its ancient pre-eminence; but in the case of the *tangible* monuments come down to us from the Gnostics themselves, we ought henceforth to be fully convinced that it is in the *antiquities of Egypt* we must look for our chief information: and if the ideas, terminology, and symbols of Judaism (that is, of the Kabbala) have lent certain doctrines to this system, yet it is *Egyptian* art that has furnished it with the greatest part of its symbols."

This grand development of the old Wisdom of Egypt in a new phase is the most conspicuously exhibited in that very numerous class of engraved gems popularly and indiscriminately called *Abraxas, Basilidan,* and *Gnostic* stones, almost the sole production of the expiring Glyptic Art during the last two centuries of the Western Empire. But, contrary to the generally received notion concerning their nature, a careful study of their numerous subdivisions has fully convinced me that only a very small minority amidst their multitude present any traces of the influence of Christian doctrines; being for the most part the fruit of religious ideas which had flourished long before the first dawn of Christianity. An important portion, indeed, originating in the primitive Egyptian Mythology, have more connexion with Magic and Medicine than with any religious object; and their employment as talismans establishes

for them a higher antiquity than belongs to the real "Abraxas" gems, the date of whose origin is historically ascertained. The subject therefore will be more conveniently approached by considering in the first place the Agathodæmon, Chnuphis, or Chneph figures, often named "Dracontia," and erroneously attributed to the Ophites and such-like semi-Christian sects, as their actual *inventors.*

It cannot however be denied, that although these last-named sectaries did not *invent* this emblem, yet that they generally adopted it for their distinguishing badge or, to use their technical word, "seal." And this circumstance leads to a remark which, applying to all talismans alike, may aptly serve for preface to the following dissertation upon their several classes. In the primitive Nature-worship of the Old World all religion consisted in the deification of the great visible Powers of the Universe. The Supreme Beings therefore belonged to the present World, consequently all the blessings they could confer were limited to this life. The means, of whatever kind, supposed to secure the goodwill of these Powers had for object tangible blessings alone—wealth, peace, long life, posterity—in fact all those rewards promised by Moses to the obedient Israelites. The engraved stones under consideration, being legacies of this older religion, were designed to secure temporal not spiritual benefits to the wearers. The latter were not even dreamed of by people holding the belief "mors ultima linea rerum est." This fact explains why so many of the Gnostic gems are in reality no more than medicinal agents, and prescribed by physicians, Heathen and Christian alike, in their regular practice, from Nechepsos down to Alexander Trallianus. On the other hand the true Gnostics, whose sole profession was the knowledge of the other world, when they applied to the doctrines of the ancient religion the same method of interpretation that the Kabbalists had used for Moses and the Prophets (of which the *Pistis-Sophia* has left us such ingenious specimens), subjected all the productions of the former creed to the same Procrustean torture, and consequently availed themselves of these same symbols—nay, more, continued to manufacture them in their own sense of their import.

The *Agathodæmon*—"Good Genius"—whose very name furnishes the reason why he should be chosen to figure on an ornament intended to defend its wearer from all disease and mischance, is depicted as a huge *serpent* having the head of a *lion*, surrounded by a crown of *seven* or *twelve* rays—components conspicuously announcing that he is the embodiment of the idea of the Sun-god. This figure is usually accompanied, either on obverse or reverse, with its proper title, written variously ΧΝΟΤΒΙΣ, ΧΝΟΤΦΙΣ, and ΧΝΟΤΜΙΣ, accordingly as the engraver fancied he could best master that difficulty to the Greek mouth, the true sound of our letter B. This name Salmasius* considers as a rendering of the Coptic ΧΝΟΤΒ, *gold*; and hence explains another title which sometimes takes its place, ΧΟΛΧΝ-ΟΤΒΙΣ, as "All-golden." Jablonsky, however, derives the word more plausibly from ΧΝΟΤΜ, *good*, and ΙΣ, *spirit*, and thus makes "Agothodæmon" to be the literal translation of the name.†

This last had become in the third century the popular name for the hooded snake of Egypt. Lampridius has "Heliogabalus Ægyptios dracunculos Romæ habuit, quos illi *Agathodæmonas* vocant." This kind was the Uraeus, to be seen commonly on Egyptian monuments, where it is the badge of royalty placed upon the head of the sovereign. It is the *hadji hasher* of the modern Arabs, the cobra di capello of the Hindoos. I have met with a large sard engraved in the late Roman-Egyptian style, with two imperial busts *regardant;* reverse, the Chnuphis Serpent, with the legend in *Roman* letters AGATHODAEMON, the sole instance known to me of such an amulet with a *Latin* inscription: but which goes far to confirm Jablonsky's interpretation of the Coptic title. In classical Greek the original Chneph becomes *Canopus;* hence the Canopic vase often appears between two serpents for heraldic supporters. But in those lower times, so fruitful in the Chnuphis talismans, no more Canopic vases appear on gems.

* He has treated the subject at some length in that learned miscellany of his, the treatise 'De Anno Climacterico.'

† The prototype appears to have been that ancient figure of Atmon (the Sun) designated as ΗΓΕ "The Serpent" *par éminence*, and which was a winged serpent having human arms and feet. He is thus painted on mummy-cases as guardian of the inmate.

The ancient Agathodæmon, in the form of his congener the Cobra, still haunts the precincts of the Hindoo temples, as of old the shrines of Isis; and issues from his hole at the sound of a fife to accept the oblation of milk from the attendant priest. As with the ancients so with the Hindoos, he is the special keeper of concealed treasure; and when a zemindar deposits his hoard in the prepared hiding-place, he, to make assurance doubly sure, builds up a serpent therewith, to watch over the gold. Suetonius records that Tiberius had a most appropriate pet in a "serpens draco"; but having found it one day devoured by a swarm of ants, the suspicious Cæsar took warning from its fate to beware of the force of a multitude of feeble individuals; and consequently secured his person against all danger of popular outbreak by shutting himself up in the inaccessible fastness of Capri.

But to return to the type of the Agathodæmon upon our gems. Over the seven rays of the lion's crown, and corresponding to their points, stand often the seven vowels of the Greek alphabet, ΑΕΗΙΟΥΩ, testifying the Seven Heavens; a mystery whereof notice shall be taken in the fitting place. The reverse of such gems is invariably occupied by a special symbol resembling the letter S, or Z, thrice repeated, or the convolutions of a spiral cord, and traversed by a straight rod through their middle; a symbol for which many and the most whimsical explanations have been proposed. Of these the most ingenious, but also the most fanciful, makes it represent the spinal marrow traversing the spine—certainly an apt device for a medicinal talisman. But whatever its primary meaning it was probably imported in its present shape from India (that true fountain-head of Gnostic iconography). It is to be seen in two varieties, upon series 16 and 17 in Plate VII. of E. Thomas' admirable Essay on the Primitive Coinage of India, amongst the punch-marks.

The Chnuphis Serpent.

A Limoges enamelled plaque of the twelfth century (in the collection of Mr. Octavius Morgan) represents on its one half "Moyses" lifting up the Brazen Serpent to the "Filii Israel." On the other half, "similis Aaron" is seen inscribing with a

reed pen the mystic Tau Cross upon the foreheads of the elect. The first of these tableaux offers the most extraordinary feature in its representation of the serpent, depicted here with *lion's head and mane:* the veritable Agathodæmon Chnuphis of our Alexandrian talismans. The preservation of this form to so late a period fills one with surprise: it indicates a traditionary belief that the symbol was the giver of life and health. The belief must have come down from the times when the Egyptian talisman was commonly worn, in the way Galen mentions, as a protection to the chest. The Brazen Serpent of Moses and the Plasma Agathodæmon of King Nechepsos had in all probability one and the same origin, giving currency to those little ingots which formed the sole money of the Hindoos before the establishment of the Macedonians in Bactria. But the most probable solution of the question is that the symbol stealthily represents the serpent-entwined club of Aesculapius (itself so hard to account for), or the wand similarly encircled, which was the badge of Egyptian priesthood. And what renders this conjecture of mine almost a certainty is an *as* of the gens Acilia, bearing for obverse the head of Aesculapius, for reverse a *wand* (not the usual club) placed vertically and encircled by his serpent in *three* convolutions. This type, if slightly defaced by wear, would become identical in appearance with the Chnuphis symbol. The spiral frequently takes the form of the letters S S S disconnected, traversed by a straight line. The curative virtue ascribed to the sigil, again, tends to indicate its derivation from the proper badge of the god of the healing art. For the eminent physician Marcellus Empiricus (who flourished at Bordeaux in Theodosius' reign) promises wonderful effects in the cure of pleurisy from the wearing of this very figure engraved upon a cerulean Scythian jasper. Whether this promise be true or not, marvellous has been the vitality of the symbol itself; for reduced to a double S S upon a bar, it became a favourite device in the times of chivalry, being taken as the rebus upon the word *Fermesse** (SS *fermées*) and the emblem of constancy. Hence comes it that this ancient Egyptian symbol now adorns

* This sigla in its simplest form, ß, makes its appearance in profusion over all the buildings of Henri IV., where it is popularly ex-

the Collar of the Garter, formerly known as the "Collars of SS." Meyrick's derivation of the name from the initial of "Souver ayne," motto of Henry IV. when Earl of Derby (and on whose effigy the Collar first appears), is of little weight; for that king was long posterior to the institution of the Order and its insignia. Even more preposterous is Camden's idea that the name originated in the initials of Sanctus Simo Simplicius, a famous Roman lawyer; and therefore was taken for badge by his profession—a theory which assuredly does not account for Henry's queen, Joan of Navarre, being similarly decorated with her husband upon their monument.

That the Agathodæmon sigil was not only pre-Christian, but ascended to the remotest antiquity in its use as a talisman, plainly appears from Galen's notice thereof (De Simp. Med. 6 ix.). "Some indeed assert that a virtue of this kind is inherent in certain stones, such as *it is certain* is possessed by the green jasper, which benefits the chest and mouth of the stomach, when tied upon them. Some indeed set the stone in a ring, and engrave upon it a serpent with head crowned with rays, according to the directions of King Nechepsos in his thirteenth book. Of this material I have had much experience, having made a necklace out of stones of the kind, and hung it about the patient's neck, descending low enough to touch the mouth of the stomach, and they proved to be of no less benefit than if they had been engraved in the manner laid down by King Nechepsos." This treatise by Nechepsos must have been a regular Manual for the use of Magicians, for Ausonius mentions its author as

"Quique magos docuit mysteria vana Nechepsi."
"Nechepsos, teacher of vain Magic's lore."

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plained as relating to Gabrielle d'Estrées, a rebus in its sound, "S percé d'un *trait*." But Longpérier has shown that the same figure is to be found on the medals of Henri's mother and sister, and even upon articles made for Anne of Austria; and he acquiesces in the explanation given in the text, which is taken from an old book, 'Les Bigarrures,' chap. "Des Rébus de la Picardie," by Etienne Tabouret, Sieur des Accords—('Revue Numismatique' for 1856, p. 276).

"*Fermesse*, dont l'Amour peint un Chiffre d'amour
Commune en l'écriture, mais rare dans le cœur,
Mais ainsi que la forme est d'un arc mis en deux
Le désir inconstant froisse et brise tes nœuds,
Ce pendant que les mains ta *fermesse* figurent."
'Lovs Papon,' 16th century.

The book, perhaps the foundation of the pretended Evax, was the first source of the notions concerning the virtues of sigils and gems preserved to us in the mediæval "Lapidaria." Pliny (vii. 50) quotes him along with his countryman Petosiris as an astrological authority, according to whose rule of the "Tetartomorion" (or law deduced from the position of three signs, *Trine*) the possible duration of human life in the region of Italy extended to 124 years. And before dismissing Nechepsos and his book it may be as well to add here—for the fact will be of service in a further stage of this inquiry—that Pliny mentions (xxx. 2) a second school of Magic, "but more recent by many thousand years" than Zoroaster's, and founded by the *Jews*, Moses, Iannes and Jotapes. The first of the trio may be the Talmudist to whose "secret volume" Juvenal alludes—

"Tradidit arcano quacumque volumine Moses."

Although the Apostle couples Iannes along with Iambres amongst the Egyptian opponents of the Hebrew legislator, Juvenal also informs us that the nation retained even in his times their ancient fame of veracious interpreters of dreams; nay, more, grown "wiser than Daniel," they even *produced* them to order—

"Qualiacunque voles Judæi somnia mittunt."

"The Jew, for money, sends what dreams you choose."

Hippolytus in the following century remarks that the "Samaritans, or "Simonians," founded by the first preacher of the Gnosis, Simon Magus himself, availed themselves of this power in order to plague their adversaries, "sending the *dream-producing* demons to trouble whomsoever they please." The mediæval name for engraved gems regarded as talismans, viz., "Pierres d'Israel," is better founded than is generally supposed. The obvious difficulty that graven figures—nay, more, idols—could not have been the work of Jews, is answered by the Rabbinical gloss upon the Second Commandment, which allows the wearing of any sort of design cut in *intaglio*, though prohibiting anything of the sort in relief.

The choice of the green *jasper* (now called *plasma**) for the Agathodæmon sigils was probably dictated by the resemblance of its colour to that of the sacred Asp—green banded with brown. As for the figure itself, a very ancient testimony as to its nature and signification is afforded by the tradition Eusebius has preserved (I. 7): "The serpent, unless injured by violence, never dies naturally, for which reason the Phœnicians have given it the name of the 'Good Genius,' *Agathodæmon.* For the same cause the Egyptians have called it 'Cneph,' and given to it the head of a hawk, because of the especial swiftness of that bird." The priest of Epeae, entitled "Head-interpreter of sacred things and Scribe," had expounded the allegory thus: "The most divine Nature of all was one Serpent having the face of a hawk, and most delightful in aspect, for when he opened his eyes he filled all the places of his native region with light; but when he closed them, darkness immediately ensued." The serpent on our gems, however, does not appear invested with a hawk's head, but with a *lion's;* for which reason this legend applies better to the Abraxas-god, occasionally equipped with a hawk's or lion's head, in place of his proper one, that of a cock. But the idea is certainly embodied in that common design upon the Mithraic gems, a man grasping a serpent, of which the radiated head points at his eyes and seems to supply them with light. Furthermore, the meaning of the figure of the Agathodæmon is clearly denoted by the Chaldee legend frequently accompanying it. CEMECEIAAM, "The Everlasting Sun," which is sometimes followed by ΨΕ, probably used as sacred numerals, for they have the power in Greek arithmetic of 705. This same legend is attached to a *classical* figure of Phœbus (such as he appears on the coins with the legend SOLI INVICTO COMITI) engraved upon a yellow jasper in the Marlborough Cabinet—a fact sufficiently attesting the accuracy of the interpretation here given to the Chaldee inscription.

Astrology likewise lent its aid to accrediting the virtues of the

* The green *jasper* of the moderns was the molochites or molochas of the ancients, for Pliny describes it as *opaque*, dark-green, and specially used for amulets.

sigil. That great authority Hephaestion (quoted by Salmasius, *i.e.*) observes that ΧΝΟΤΜΙϹ is the name of one of the *Decani*, or three chief stars in Cancer; whilst another astrologer laid down that the star so called was set in the breast of Leo, and *for that reason* was efficacious for the cure of all diseases in the chest of man. And in fact we find this latter dictum confirmed by the prayer ΦΤΛΑϹϹΕ ΤΓΙΗ ϹΤΟΜΑΧΟΝ ΠΡΟΚΛΟΤ, "Keep in good health the chest of Proclus," engraved upon the back of one of these very Chnuphis gems. Others of the same kind are again surrounded by a long Coptic legend often arranged in the outline of a serpent, varying in words, but always terminating in the epithet ΓΙΓΑΝΤΥΡΗΚΤΑ or ΠΑΙΚΤΑ, "Breaker" or "Mocker" of the Giants—that is, of the evil and rebellious Angels; for the Grecian fable of the War of the Giants against Jove had then revived, a Zoroastrian interpretation being applied to the rebellion of Ahriman and his demons against Ormuzd and the Ministers of Good.

The method of employing a talisman is thus prescribed in the Magic Papyrus, § 9:—"A Spell of Alleius Cræonius, spoken to the Lamp," "Ωχμαρμαχω τοννουραι χρη μιλλον δερκυων να Ιαο σουμψηφισον σουμψηνις σωσια σιαωι, Thou that shakest the world! Enter, and deliver an oracle concerning such and such a matter. Θοιο κοτοθ φθουφνουν νουεβουη επτασπαχατου. The engraved stone (λ.γ.) Serapis seated in front, having the Egyptian crown (βασιλήϊον) ξξ, and upon his sceptre an ibis, on the back of the stone the Name; and lock it up and keep it for use. Hold in thy left hand the ring, and in thy right a branch of olive and of bay-tree, waving them over the lamp, repeating all the while the spells even times. And having drawn the ring upon the proper finger of thy left hand, facing and being inwards (the engraving), stick the gem against thy left ear, and go to sleep, without returning answer to any one." The object of this charm was (although not so stated) to procure prophetic dreams, which are actually enumerated amongst the effects to follow from the use of the one that stands next in the MS.

Although the original intention of these Chnuphis sigils was unquestionably the one pointed out in the preceding pages, yet

there is every probability from the nature of the case that the same were adopted and interpreted in a *spiritual* sense by the numerous and influential sect that first assumed the title of "Gnostics." They had an all-sufficient reason for so doing, in the fundamental doctrine of their creed. The well-informed and temperate Hippolytus, writing at the most flourishing period of these transitional theosophies, thus opens his actual 'Refutation of all Heresies' and his Fifth Book with the description "of that sect which hath dared to boast the *Serpent* as the author of their religion, as they prove by certain arguments wherewith *he* hath inspired them. On this account the apostles and priests of this creed have been styled 'Naaseni,' from 'Naas,' the Hebrew word for *serpent:* but subsequently they entitled themselves 'The Gnostics,' because they alone understood the deep things of religion. Out of this sect sprung many other teachers, who by diversifying the original doctrines through inventions of their own became the founders of new systems." Further on he has a passage bearing immediately upon this subject. "This *Naas* is the *only thing* they worship, for which reason they are called 'Naaseni' (*i.e. Ophites*, or Serpent-worshippers). From this same word *Naas* they pretend that all the temples (*ναοί*) under Heaven derive the name. And unto this Naas are dedicated every rite, ceremony, mystery, that is; in short, not one rite can be found under Heaven into which this Naas doth not enter. For they say the Serpent signifies the element Water; and with Thales of Miletus contend that nothing in the Universe can subsist without it, whether of things mortal or immortal, animate or inanimate. All things are subject unto him; and he is good, and hath all good things within himself as in the horn of a unicorn, so that he imparts beauty and perfection unto all that is, inasmuch as he pervades all things, as flowing out of Eden, and divided into four heads. . . . This Naas is the 'water above the firmament,' and likewise the 'living water' spoken of by the Saviour. Unto this *Water* all Nature is drawn, and attracts out of the same whatever is analogous to its own nature, each thing after its own kind, with more avidity than the loadstone draws the iron, the ray of the sea-hawk gold, or amber straws. Then they go

on to boast: We are the *Spiritual*, who have drawn our own portion out of the living water of the Euphrates that flows through the midst of Babylon; and who have entered in through the True Gate, the which is Jesus the Blessed. And we of all men are the *only Christians*, in the Third Gate celebrating the Mystery, being anointed with the ineffable ointment out of the *horn* like David, not out of the *earthen vessel* like Saul who conversed with the Evil Spirit of carnal concupiscence."

Euphrates, a more recent teacher of the sect, who founded the branch calling themselves "Peratai," or Fatalists, has a passage that indicates the sense in which his followers may have accepted these Chnuphis gems. "To them therefore of the Children of Israel who were bitten in the Wilderness Moses showed the *True and Perfect Serpent;* in whom whosoever trusteth he shall not be bitten by the serpents of the Wilderness, that is, shall not be hurt by the *Powers.* No one therefore is able to heal and to save them that be gone forth out of Egypt, that is, out of the body and out of the world, save that Perfect, Full of all fulness, Serpent. In Him whosoever putteth his trust, that man perisheth not by the serpents of the Wilderness, that is, by the gods of the nativity."

These last Powers, whom Euphrates (a pure astrologer) in another place calls the "gods of death," are the stars of the horoscope, "which impose upon all that be born the fatal yoke of the changeful nativity," that is, the necessity of *death*, the necessary consequence of *birth*, a doctrine that clearly leads to the efficacy of the Serpent sigil as a talisman to protect the wearer against the malign influence of the astral genii. The Ophites, in fact, were the legitimate descendants of the Bacchic Mystae, whose religion during the two centuries preceding our era must have been the predominant one in the great cities of Asia Minor. An argument derived from Numismatics establishes the common fact—the coinage of the chief cities, Ephesus, Apamea, Pergamus, was issued chiefly in the form of *Cistophori*, having for obverse the Bacchic Serpent raising himself out of the sacred coffer; for reverse, two serpents entwined round torches.

THE ABRAXAS.

I. Abraxaster, or Borrowed Types.

Bellermann in his lucid little treatise, 'Drei Programmen über die Abraxas-gemmen,'* has divided his subject into three parts—the true *Abraxas*, all of which bear the Pantheos commonly so entitled, whose creation is assigned to Basilides himself; the *Abraxaster*, or types borrowed from the old religions, but adapted by the Gnostic semi-Christians to the expression of their own new ideas; and *Abraxoid*, which, though vulgarly accounted Basilidan gems, have no connection at all with Basilides' own doctrines, but owe their origin entirely to the astrologers of *his* or anterior times.

The *Abraxaster* gems, therefore, on account of this priority of their first creation, have by right the first claim to be considered; and this mode of treating the subject possesses the additional advantage of elucidating the sources of many ideas that strike us as so extraordinary in the Gnostic creed.

The strangely heterogeneous mixture of creeds that prevailed over the Roman Empire during the two centuries between the reigns of Trojan and Constantine is exemplified by numerous allusions in the 'Historia Augusta,' equally with their tangible monuments, which are the subject of this inquiry. What vast encouragement (little enough needed, of a truth) must have been given to the talisman-makers by the accession to imperial power of the Syrian priest Heliogabalus! "He used to sacrifice *human victims*, selecting for the purpose, throughout all Italy, boys of noble birth and conspicuous beauty, having both parents living, in order that both parties might feel the keener anguish. In fact *Magicians* of every sort attended upon him and practised their arts every day, whilst he gave them every encouragement, and returned thanks to the gods for his having met with their especial favourites, at the same time that he was prying into the entrails of the sacrificed children, and torturing the victims to death, after the rules of his national religion." —(*Lampridius.*) And yet the same amusing chronicler puts it

* Berlin, 1820.

down amongst the *accomplishments* of his model Emperor, Severus Alexander, cousin-german to the monster he has previously portrayed—"that he was a great proficient in Judicial Astrology (*mathesis*), so that he gave permission to astrologers to profess and teach that science publicly at Rome. He was moreover very well skilled in divination by victims (*haruspicina*); also an excellent diviner by birds (*ornithoscopos*), so far as even to surpass the Augurs of Spain and Pannonia." This same "every way accomplished gentleman' (to use the Elizabethan phrase) set up the statues of Abraham and Christ side by side with Orpheus and Alexander in his private chapel (*Sacrarium*); whilst his mad predecessor had conceived the grand notion of founding one universal syncretistic religion; for having conveyed to Rome his Emesene god (the *aerolite*), he built for him a temple on the Palatine, whither he transferred the Palladium, Vesta's fire, the Ancilia, the Cybele—in short, whatever object of worship was most sacred to the Romans. Nay, more—he talked of drawing into the same centre the "*religions* of the Jews and Samaritans and the *devotion* of the Christians, in order that his deity, Elagabal, might possess the mystery of every other creed."—(*Heliogabalus*, 3.)

Of the Abraxaster class the figures are for the most part drawn from the ancient iconography of the Egyptian religion; but they were adopted in a more spiritual sense by the newly-arisen sects, holding the doctrines of Christianity strangely amalgamated with the old teachings of the Mysteries.*

Of all these borrowed types the most frequent and most important is the Jackal-headed *Anubis* (sometimes double-headed, the human being superadded to his own), and bearing the caduceus of Hermes to denote his office of conducting souls, not as of yore through the shades of the lower world,† but along the planetary path to their final rest in the Pleroma. Thus the Gnostic

* Many of the actual *types*—the mummified erect Osiris, the reclining Isis, the Nile, the Horus on the lotus-flower, the Anubis, &c.—occur on the contemporary Alexandrian coins; they therefore can only be accounted Gnostic productions when their Hebrew inscriptions certify their authorship.

† In the paintings on the mummy-case of Petemenopt (or Ammonius), Osiris the Occidental, invoked in the papyrus ritual inclosed with the corpse, is seen seated on his throne;

Gospel, "Pistis-Sophia" (§ 20), describing the Saviour after receiving his luminous vestment, inscribed with the Five words of power and with the names of all the Domination to be encountered in his Ascension, makes him come first to the Gate of the firmament, then to the God of the sphere, then to the Sphere of Fate, and lastly to the Twelve great Æons: all which Powers when they beheld their own *names* written upon his vesture were smitten with fear and began to sing hymns unto him.

This Anubis-Hermes appears sometimes waving a palm-branch, to proclaim his victory over the Powers of Evil; or presiding at the *psychostasia* "weighing of the soul," the scene commonly pictured in the Egyptian Ritual of the Dead. In the latter character he stands here for Christ, the Judge of the quick and the dead; but his successor in mediæval art is the Archangel Michael, who holds the scales. In the old Greek gems Hermes is often represented as bending forward, caduceus in hand, and by its mystic virtue assisting a soul to emerge from the depths of the earth—a strange coincidence in form, probably too in origin, with the mediæval picture of the Saviour lifting souls out of Purgatory. The Zoroastrian Hell, a burning lake of molten metal, into which, on the Judgment-Day, Ahriman with his followers were to be cast, had for object the ultimate *purification* and restoration to their pristine state of the condemned—a merciful doctrine, held by Origen, and partly allowed by Jerome.

Hermes in this particular character of *Psychopompos* was made great use of by the Naaseni (Ophites) as the prophetic representative of the Saviour in his grandest office. They interpreted Hermes' leading souls through darkness into Elysium as Christ's guiding the minds of the *enlightened* out of *Ignorance* into *Knowledge*, in their special sense of the words. As may well be supposed, they descanted largely upon that

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at his side, his wife and sister, Isis. In front stands an altar, loaded with flowers, fruits, and libations. Anubis, recognisable by his jackal's head crowned with the *pschent* (tall cap), because, like the Hermes of the Greeks, he discharges important functions equally in the supernal and infernal regions (the place of the Four Amenti), presents to his sire the defunct Petemenopt, swathed in his sepulchral bandages, and holding up his hands in the attitude of supplication.

peculiar symbol, under which form Hermes, surnamed Cyllenius, was worshipped. Amongst their mystical expositions of the object one curious fact appears, that its popular name was ἀγαθοφόρον, "bringer of good luck," for which cause it was set up at cross-roads, and upon house-tops. But as regards the ancient religion, since it is thus made out that this attribute, later modified into a Pillar, stood for Cyllenius, guide of departed souls (exactly as the same figure, *lingam*, represents Siva, Lord of the dead in modern Hinduism), the reason becomes obvious why its sculptured representations should have been the earliest form of monument placed over the departed. The monuments secured for the dweller in the grave the perpetual protection of the Guide and Shepherd of souls; a colossal phallus crowns to this day the summit of the oldest tomb, the date of which is historically certain, the tumulus of the Lydia king, Alyattes. The Asiatic colonists carried with them into Italy the same belief in the protective virtues of the symbol; carved in stone it regularly surmounted the door of the sepulchre. One lately came into my possession, inscribed around with the name and patronymic of the deceased Etruscan, whose repose it had so long guarded, SVSES FELVS FENTV, "Suses, son of Phintas."

This double character of Anubis is very curiously expressed by the figure upon a sard belonging to myself, which to the casual observer presents that most orthodox of types, the Good Shepherd, carrying a lamb upon his shoulders, leaning upon his staff, his loins bound with a girdle having long and waving ends. But upon closer examination this so innocent personage resolves himself into the double-headed god of Egypt, the lamb's head doing duty for the jackal's, springing from the same shoulders with that of the man, whilst the floating end of the girdle is turned into the bushy tail of the wolfish beast, and the "latrator Anubis" bursts upon our astonished eyes. This identification of character in Anubis and Christ enables us rightly to understand that drawing, the discovery of which created such a sensation at Rome a few years back, scratched (*graffito*) roughly on the plaster of a room in a house buried (in ancient times) under the extended buildings of the Palatine.

It represents this same jackal-headed man holding in front of him a Latin Cross with his outstretched hands, and standing on a pedestal, in front of his worshipper, who makes the customary form of *adoration* by raising his hand to his lips, and who has expressed the object of his handiwork by the inscription ΑΛΕΞΑΜΕΝΟϹ ϹΕΒΕΤΕ ΘΆΕΟΝ. In reality the production of some devout, but illiterate Gnostic, it is construed by its present owners* into a shocking heathen blasphemy, and a jibe upon the good Christian Alexamenos, because they mistake the jackal's head for that of an ass, and consequently imagine an intentional caricature of their own Crucifix.

The discovery of this picture clearly illustrates a passage of Tertullian (Apol. xvi.) where he says to his opponents: "Like many others you have dreamed that an *Ass's Head* is our god. But a new version of our god has lately been made public at Rome, ever since a certain hireling convict of a bullfighter put forth a picture with some such inscription as this, 'the god of the Christians ΟΝΟΚΟΙΗΤΗΣ.' He was depicted thus—with the ears of an ass, and with one of his feet hoofed, holding in his hand a book, and clothed in the toga." An exact description this of the Anubis figured by Matter (Pl. ii. c. No. 1.), save that instead of a book the god carries a cadceus and palm-branch. The same calumny was somewhat later transferred by the Christians themselves to the account of the Gnostics. Not being acquainted with the Egyptian beast, they mistook (perhaps intentionally) the head of the jackal for that of the ass, which in truth it strongly resembles in the rude drawing of our gems. Thus we find, at the close of the fourth century, Epiphanius asserting "that the Gnostic Sabaoth has, according to some, the face of an *Ass*, according to others, that of a Hog; on which latter account He hath forbidden the Jews to eat swine's flesh." This second notion was a very ancient one, being alluded to by Petronius in 'Judæus licet et *porcinum* numen adoret." Now *Sabaoth* being held by the Gnostics as the national god of the Jews, it seems probable that this same confusion of one beast with the other was the real source of

* Having been cut from the wall and deposited in the museum of the Collegio Romano.

the opinion so prevalent amongst the ancients, and quoted by Tacitus (Hist. v. 4). "The sacred object so zealously guarded from profane eyes within the Sanctuary at Jerusalem was the figure of the *wild ass* by whose guidance they had relieved their thirst and their distress, Moses having, through the observation of the movements of a troop of these animals, discovered the spring, the waters of which saved his followers from perishing in the desert." This legend was furthermore connected with the belief that the real god of the Jews was Bacchus, for the ass was sacred to the god of wine. For this dedication Pliny finds a singular reason in the fact that the ass was fond of fennel, a deadly poison to all other quadrupeds, but a plant specially consecrated to Bacchus (xxxv. 1). Again, the spurious gospel 'The Genealogy of Mary' assigns for the cause of the death of Zacharias, son of Barachias, that once entering the Temple he beheld standing within the Sanctuary a man with the face of an ass, and when he was rushing out to cry unto the people, Woe unto you! Whom do ye worship? he was smitten with dumbness by the apparition. But afterwards, when he had recovered his speech, and revealed what he had seen unto the Jews, they slew him for a blasphemer. And this they gave as a reason wherefore the High Priest had bells fastened around the hem of his garment, in order that this monstrous deity might by their tinkling be warned of the approach of man, and so have the time to conceal himself. This wild story is preserved by Epiphanius alone, for the original work is entirely lost. It was ascribed to St. Matthew, and was taken for their special textbook by the Collyridians, who got their name from their custom of sacrificing cakes to the Virgin Mary, whom they pretended was also born of a virgin. Faustus, bishop of Riez, cites this same gospel concerning the parentage of Mary. But the apocryphal gospel, 'The Birth of Mary,' still extant, is of a totally different character, being a mere monkish invention of the most orthodox stupidity; and which, coupled with the 'Protevangelion,' became the source of all the mediæval pictures and sculptures that set forth the history of the Madonna.

To the same Egyptian family likewise belongs the boy *Harpocrates* or *Horus* (the vernal Sun), having the symbol of

fecundity monstrously exaggerated and seated upon the lotus, which expressed the same idea by its abundant seeds; and also *Perfection* because for its flower, fruit, bulb, all exhibit the form of the *circle*, as Iamblichus observes. Macrobius too remarks that *Horus* is the Egyptian equivalent for Apollo, who gave his name to the twenty-four *hours* of day and night: and this acceptation of his character is recorded by the Alexandrian plasma (Vienna Cabinet, I. 39) which identifies him with the Grecian Sun god: ΜΕΓΑϹ ѠΡΟϹ ΑΠΟΛΛѠΝ ΑΡΠΟΚΡΑΤΗϹ ЄΤΙΛΑΤΟϹ ΤѠ ΦΟΡΟΥΝΤΙ. He often appears accompanied by Anubis in the character of his messenger. Again, Horus is seen adored by the kneeling Cynocephalus baboon, the animal consecrated to Luna. This last curious animal also belonged to Thoth, scribe of the gods, and makes a favourite Gnostic device performing his devotions before a pillar covered all over with inscriptions and supporting a *triangle*, symbol of the Moon whose influence was supposed singularly to affect his constitution. This *pillar* clearly enough denotes those "Pillars of Hermes," by means of which Iamblichus solved all the questions propounded to him by Porphyrius (*Jam. De Mysterieis*, II.).

To make the allusion more certain, these beings are even designated in the spells by their proper name of "Titans." Ficoroni has given in his *Formæ* No. 4 a mould for casting the reverse of a medalet, of the 3 B size, bearing the Dioscuri facing each other, holding their spears point downwards, in token of amity, in their left hands each a *situla*. Behind, vertically ϹΑΒΑѠΤ in two lines: in the exergue ΤΙΤΑΝ, space not admitting the remainder of the title—too well-known besides to require more than such a reminiscence.

Horus is often figured sailing through the heavens in the sacred boat, the *Baris* steered by two hawks; solar emblems, with sun and moon overhead, and taking the same titles ΙΑΩ, ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΛΒΑ, &c., as the great Abraxas-god himself, and with reason, the same idea being couched in the two personifications. *Horus*, as Heliodorus records (Æth. ix. 22), was also applied to the Nile, whose Greek name Νεῖλος also contained the mystic solar number 365; this voyager in the *baris* is analogous to the Hindoo Neryana, the child floating

in his argah leaf upon the face of the waters having his whole body coloured *blue* (nila). To complete the resemblance the *situla* regularly carried from a cord in the hand of Anubis is the very *lotah*, brass drinking cup, of the modern Brahmins. Those common emblems, the baris and the coiled serpent, have their Gnostic meaning fully explained by a remarkable passage in the Pistis-Sophia (§ 359). "And the disk of the sun was a *Great Dragon* whose tail was in his mouth, who went up into the Seven Powers on the left hand, being drawn by four Powers having the similitude of white horses. But the going of the Moon was in the shape of a *boat*, the rudder whereof showed a male and female dragon with two white cows drawing the same, and the figure of a child on the stern guiding the dragons, who drew away the light from the *Rulers* (the regular synonym in the book for the rebellious Æons, lords of the Zodiac), and in front of the child was the similitude of a cat."

The *Regeneration* of the "Spiritual Man" occasionally decorates these talismans, being symbolised in the most materialistic manner by the Solar Lion impregnating a naked woman, the recognised emblem of the soul, who, "quadrupedum ritu," submits with joy to the vivifying operation. And the spiritual man thus regenerate is again depicted under the form of a human outline holding up by the neck a huge serpent, both of them entirely filled up with inscribed letters, amongst which the mystic Seven Vowels largely predominate.

Scaliger, however, as cited by Salmasius in the above-quoted work, takes this figure to be the representative of the combined 365 Æons, all whose names are *supposed* to be condensed within his outline—in short he is the emblem of the Pleroma, and stands for the "Adam-Kadmon" of the Kabbalists, the Primal Man, the Ophite *Adamas*, after whose image the second Adam was made. Or again, this same combination may have been intended to display the Seven Vowels, with their forty and nine Powers, the virtues whereof are so wondrously exalted by the inspired writer of the Pistis-Sophia (§ 378), whose words are cited in another place.* But as the fact bears directly upon the

* Goodwin's 'Magic Papyrus,' gives, at the end of a spell (No. 1) terminating in several vowel-combinations, these directions for pro-

sigil before us, it may be mentioned here that the same gospel (358) makes the Saviour open his "Prayer" with the ejaculation, ΑΕΗΙΟΥΩΙΑΩΩΑ ΙΩΙΑ; which, as enveloping the mystic Name of God, were the most obvious spell to be selected to fill up so important a talisman. Neither is it out of place to conclude this inquiry with the notice that the motto of the mediæval House of Hapsburgh was the *Latin* vowels A.E.I.O.V. These enigmatical letters were interpreted by the arrogance of succeeding generations, puffed up with imperial dignity, into the initials of the prophecy "Austriae est imperare orbi universo." But I more than suspect that the *five* Latin letters were adopted by some *illuminato* amongst the ancient Dukes (perhaps acquired during his alchemical studies) as containing the same transcendental virtues with the Gnostic *seven* of the Greek alphabet.

The *winged* goddesses Athor and Sate, representing the Roman Venus and Juno, sometimes are found accompanied with such legends as makes it evident they too had been pressed into the Gnostic service, as representatives of certain amongst the *feminine* Æons.* But another shape repeatedly presents his monstrosity to our astonished gaze, whose true character almost sets conjecture at defiance, but evidently the offspring of very diverse ideas most strangely commingled. He is an aged man, Priapean, four-winged, with four hands grasping as many sceptres; he has likewise the spreading tail of the vulture and stands in the *baris*, or upon the coiled serpent, or on a tree-trunk, horizontal, whence project *five* lopped off branches. Some potent saviour must he be, for he is addressed, like Abraxas himself, by the title ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΛΒΑ! But the most prominent symbol in the monstrous collocation suggests an explanation of its hidden meaning, supplied by the following

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nouncing each—

"A, with the mouth opened, rolled about like a wave.

O, in a short manner for spiritual threatenings.

A Ω, unto Earth, Air, Heaven.

E, after the fashion of the cynocephalus.

O, in the same manner as above said.

H, with gentleness aspirated.

Υ, unto the Shepherd (Hermes), as if it were long."

* Valentinus made his Æons in pairs, male and female.

exposition of Justinus, that wildest teacher in all the Gnosis. "For this cause said he unto *Eden*, Mother, behold thy son! meaning his animal and carnal body. He himself, however, having commended his spirit into the Father's hands, ascended up unto the Good One. Now this Good One is *Priapus*, He that *created before* anything existed. On this account he is called Priapus because he *first made* all things (ἐπριαπόισε).* For this reason is he set up in every temple, being honoured by all Nature, and likewise in the roadways, having the fruits of Autumn hung about him, that is, the fruits of the Creation whereof he is the author, inasmuch as he first made the Creation which before was not."

That very frequent type, a mummy swathed in the coils of a vast serpent, is easily explained as an allusion to the protection in the next world of the ancient agatho-demon,† or the spiritual Naas of the more recent Ophites. The same belief also generated that more graceful allegory, the woman enthroned on the back of the same reptile, like the Atergatis of Phœnicia.

Interesting above the rest for the part it played in mediæval superstition is the *Osiris*, or *old man*, with radiated head, a terminal figure always shown in front face with arms crossed on the breast, the true *Baphomet* of the Templars. Sometimes he is borne aloft upon the heads of four Angels, upon whom two streams pour forth from his sides. This group has been explained as Ormuzd borne up by the Four Elements; although it may possibly refer to the notion the prophet Enoch mentions (xviii. 3) "I also beheld the *Four Winds* which bear up the earth and the firmament of heaven." The idea in truth has rather an Assyrian than Egyptian cast, for in Assyrian works Athor (Mylitta) often appears pouring out from her extended arms the Waters of Life; and again the Persian female *Ized* Arduisher is by interpretation "The giver of living water."‡

A curious specimen of ancient form, borrowed in a more

* That is, the proper symbol of Priapus, either the phallus or the Egyptian Tau.

† The HFE painted on the mummy cases in that very capacity.

‡ At Tarsus (1863) was discovered in company with aurei of Sev. Alexander and Gordian III., a talisman thus described by Longperier: "Amulet formed of lapis-lazuli, set

spiritual sense, is furnished by a pretty sard, found in the Punjab (Major Pearse), engraved with two figures of the Roman Providentia facing each other, in the field between them, the heads of Sol and Luna, and below XAIA, the Hebrew for *Life*.

The common figure ⊖ may be explained by Eusebius's description of the Egyptian hieroglyph for the world, as a circle coloured sky-blue and besprinkled with flames, in the centre an extended serpent; the whole being carelessly imitated by the letter ⊖ in the Diagramma of the Ophites.

An armed man, the Mithraic *soldier*, one of the figures regularly set up in the mystic Cave of the Solar god, often decorates a talisman, holding a spear tipped with the head of a cock, a mark of honour granted by the Persian kings to distinguished valour (as by Artaxerxes to the Carian who slew Cyrus the Younger); or else grasping a serpent in each hand. A sect that sprung up in Egypt, the Phibionites, took the title "Militant," Στρατιωτικοί. Another figure, the three-headed, three-bodied god, who, standing like Priapus, grasped with one hand the symbols of fecundity, with the other, asps and scorpions, must be the visible embodiment of the Great Τριδύναμεις, who figure so prominently in the celestial hierarchy of the Pistis-Sophia. The *Trees* sometimes enlisted in the Talismanic corps may find their motive in the "Almond-tree" of the Phrygian Mysteries, in which the Naaseni discovered the name of the Great Creator of All; or else to the "Mystery of the Five Trees," mentioned in that oft-quoted revelation, on whose true nature light is thrown by Justinus' exposition making out

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in a gold frame of rude workmansnip, with a ring for suspension. The two faces are engraved in intaglio, and represent an Æon with four wings and bird's tail, holding two spears; and with a Venus and the inscription (not reversed) APΩPI ΦPACIC, some letters of which are concealed by the setting. Length, 0·0034; weight, 5·20 grammes (= 95 grs. troy)." The same legend accompanies a Venus Anadyomene upon a large hæmatite (Praun) now in the British Museum. Montfaucon, pl. clxi. has a Venus unveiling inscribed APΩPI OPACIC, "The Vision of Arori;" and another with APPΩPIΦ IACIC, and on the field CANKTA for the owner's name. It was under such a form as this that the Supreme Tetrad brought down Truth from Heaven to display her beauty to Marcus as he describes in his 'Revelation' (see p. 218).

the *Trees* of Paradise to be the *Angels* generated between the Demiurgus Elohim and his daughter Eden.*

There is a sigil of this class, that from its frequency must have been considered of peculiar virtue. It represents a fish with immense head and shoulders, but diminutive body, as if seen from above; the reverse of the stone thus inscribed—

XΘCHΘ
MBϢY

One of the three sacred fish of the Nile must figure here; and in this talismanic character passed, with an appropriate mystic interpretation, into the symbolism of the Alexandrine Christians.

II. Abraxoids, or Gems confounded with the true Gnostic.

Our invaluable and most charming guide, Hippolytus, when describing the *Astrotheoscopi*, "Seekers of God in the stars," begins with a simile more apposite than complimentary to the fashion which then prevailed for combining astrology with every species of religion. He compares these inquirers to that silly fowl the bustard, which suffers itself to be caught by the following device. "When a man discovers a flock he begins to dance and make grimaces in front of them. The birds stand motionless, staring at him in wonderment until his confederate steals up to them from behind and knocks them on the head. In the same way (adds the good Saint, evidently much refreshed by his joke) do the people seduced by such teachers stare up at the stars, until at last they find themselves hopelessly caught in the snare of the heresy." As an example of this most curious system of theology it will suffice to quote their exposition of the doctrine conveyed by one constellation out of many. "Ophiuchus represents with his stars a man on his knees, in appearance oppressed with

* An authentic description of the Tree of Knowledge will doubtless be acceptable to my readers. "The Tree of Knowledge also was there, of which if any eats he becomes endowed with great wisdom. It was like a species of the tamarind-tree, bearing fruit which resembled grapes extremely fine; and its fragrance extended to a considerable distance. I exclaimed: 'How beautiful is this tree, and how delightful is its appearance!'"—(Book of Enoch, xxxi. 3–4).

fatigue, a posture for which that great authority in Astrology, Aratas, is at a loss to account. But rightly understood, he is *Adam* engaged in watching the Dragon's head underneath him, which is biting his heel. Over his head are seen the Lyre, and the Crown. The *Lyre* was the invention of the infant Hermes, who is in reality the Word of God: their position therefore announces that whosoever gives heed unto the Word, he shall obtain the Crown; but if he refuses to hearken unto the Word, he shall be cast down below with the Dragon." In another place Hippolytus observes: "The doctrine of the Chaldæans concerning trines, quadrates, benignant and malign stars, Euphrates the Peratist applies to Christianity, by changing the concord and discord of the stars into the constitution of the Æons, the transition of Good Powers into Evil ones, and the harmony of their respective particles. From the same source he gets his "Toparchs" and "Presidents," and all the other imagery of the astrologers."

Such being the nature of the actual foundations of Gnosticism, no wonder that it should so frequently be impossible to decide whether a talismanic sigil be the expression of some semi-Christian tenet, or merely the imagined similitude of some astral Power whose influence was thus secured for the wearer's protection. For the gods of Magianism, the religion that has so deeply tinged all Gnostic doctrines, were no other than these starry Powers. The Agathodæmon himself gave his name to one of the three Decani of Cancer, as Hephaestion hath already informed us. The very title, "Decanus," Salmasius with some reason derives from the Chaldee *Dekan*, "inspector," and thereby makes it equivalent to the Greek "Horoscopos," "The god that looks down upon the nativity." The common Latin derivation, in its military sense of "sergeant," Salmasius rejects as foreign to the idea conveyed. Again, Charchnumis is named as the First Decanus in Leo, and this title actually appears around a serpent with human and radiated head, figured by Salmasius in the same chapter. This name is sometimes written ΧΟΛΧΝΟΥΒΙΣ, which the same authority explains as "The All-golden One."

A Greek astrologer quoted without name by Salmasius gives

this curious piece of information: "There are appointed in each one of the Signs, three Decani of different forms; one *holding an axe*, the others represented variously. These figures engraved in rings are amulets against all mischance." As Teucer asserts, with other great astrologers of his times: "This, alas! too scanty notice of their attributes shows at least one of their number to be the old Babylonian god described by the prophet Baruch (*Epistle* 13, 14)—'He hath a sceptre in his hand like a man, like a judge of the kingdom—he hath in his hand a sword and an *axe*.'" But not merely the Decani of the Signs were thus worn in rings, but equally so the signs themselves, and the stars rising together with them, technically called *οἱ παρατέλλοντες*. Such images were termed *στοιχεῖα*, whence those who made a business of engraving then got the name *στοιχειοματικοί*. They performed their work with many ceremonies, and always under the *inspection* of the particular Decanus, or star, whose sigil they were embodying, On this account Epiphanius speaks of the sun, moon, and planets as *στοιχεῖα*, terming *μορφώσεις* the figures of the constellations formed by the imaginary collocation of the stars. The same writer uses the expression, "The stars that be vainly imagined in the shape of figures, which are called Signs of the Zodiac." As Diodorus distinguishes between *planets* and *στοιχεῖα*, it follows that the term was equivalent to our "constellation." All this evinces that the Arabian writers were correct in translating *στοιχειοματικοί* by "talisman-makers." How these later astrologers thought proper to portray the Ascendants of each Sign in their "Table of the Myriogeneses" will be described in my chapter upon Talismans.

A curious Praun gem represents Mercury enthroned and bearing the attributes of Jupiter, with the strange legend ΕΠΠΤΑ (*sic*) ΧΡΤΣΟΣ, which has been absurdly interpreted as referring to his *seven*-stringed lyre. More probably was the gem the signet of some "Hebdomadarian" or votary of the Number Seven; a sect of sufficient importance to get from Hippolytus a separate section for themselves in his great work. The identification of Hermes with the Christian *Logos* was one grand feature in the doctrine of the Naaseni, so lucidly set forth by that learned

Father. He was of opinion that this Hebdomadarian doctrine (derived from ancient Egyptian philosophy) was the true source of every form of Gnosticism. This potent Numeral is illustrated by another device of frequent occurrence in cameo, the Delphic ϵ crowned with a fillet, and below, the legend ΧΡΤΣΟΤ. This can be no other than that most holy of Numerals the Delphic Ἒι, or *Five*, on the mystery whereof Plutarch has left a very curious dissertation; and it represents the *golden* figure of that same numeral dedicated by Livia Augusta at the shrine of her husband's peculiar patron. And similarly the gem above referred to exhibits Hermes invested with supreme dominion, and accompanied by his own special *number*, "testudo resonare *septem** callida nervis"—the Magian method for symbolizing the different Powers of Heaven, which shall be explained in its due place, when we come to treat of the "Seven Voices."

The oddest adaptations of the imagery of the old religions mark the earliest preaching of the Gnosis. Its first apostle, Simon Magus, who passed himself off upon the Samaritans as the *third* manifestation of the Christ, was worshipped as late as Hippolytus' times, in statues made in the form of Jupiter. His famous concubine Helena (in whom Simon has discovered the Lost Sheep of the parable whilst carrying on her profession in a brothel at Tyre) was similarly adored under the forms of Minerva and the Moon (Hipp. vi. 19). The main doctrines of the Naaseni were supported by ingenious applications of the symbolism employed in the Eleusinian, Phrygian, and Samothracian Mysteries, of which Hyppolytus has given a full and very interesting account.

Phœnicia, again, furnished our talisman-makers with a copious repertory in the exaggerated symbolism of the figures whereby their priesthood had expressed their notions of the Divine Power. "Taut, the great god of the Phœnicians" (says Samoniathon), "in order to express the character of Kronos, made his image with four eyes—two in front, two behind, open and closed; also with four wings—two expanded upwards, two folded downwards. The eyes denoted that the godhead sees

* The compound Ἑπτάχρυσος is made after the same rule as the Ἑπτάχαλκος, the place in the wall of Athens where Sulla took the city.

when sleeping, and sleeps when waking; the attitude of his wings, that he flies in resting, and rests in flying. Upon his head are two wings, denoting Reason and the Senses." It is very provoking that Diodorus (xx. 19) should have given no further description of the famous Kronos, *Melcarth*, of Carthage than the brief remark that it held the hands open, palm upwards, but sloping downwards, so that the child sacrificed, when laid upon them, should roll off into a pit of fire at the foot.* When Agathocles was pressing hard the siege, and hope was almost lost, no fewer that three hundred children of the nobles were offered to Melcarth at one and the same time.

Inasmuch as the genius of the planet Saturn, or Kronos, was held by the Talmudists to be good and pure, contrary to those of the other planets, the Four-winged image, so common upon Gnostic gems, may reasonably be considered as a copy from the ancient original, devised by Taut. Saturn, the sole inspirer of the Law and the Prophets, had special claims to the veneration of the Alexandrine Kabbalists. And this belief explains wherefore Valentinus fixed upon this planet for the abode of Ildabaoth, the Giver of the Law to the Children of Israel in the Wilderness.

It sounds like a paradox to assert that our "Gnostic" gems are not the work of the Gnostics; but taking that appellation in its strictest sense, the thing is perfectly true. The talismans we are considering never exhibit any traces of that admixture of Christian and Pagan doctrines which properly constitutes the Gnosis, that subject of the descriptions and the attacks of the Fathers of the Church. Their elements are drawn from the ancient religions of Babylon and Egypt, mixed at times with the formulæ of the Jewish Kabbala. The "Gnostic" stones are in reality the paraphernalia of magicians and dealers in charms (charm-doctors in modern phrase), and only belong to the Ophites, Valentinians, and other subdivisions of the Christian Gnosis, in so far as those theosophists were especially given to

* This tradition was verified by N. Davis, who in excavating the ruins of the temple found, at a great depth, a thick layer of ashes mingled with burnt human bones. The discovery is well described in his section "Moloch and his Victims."

the cultivation of the Black Art; as the notices above cited abundantly declare. This delusive study prevailed at the period of the grand development of Gnosticism to an extent which no one can credit who has not studied the historians of the Later Empire. The accusation of "magical practices" proved a ready weapon for destroying an obnoxious individual against whom no tangible crime could be charged: what stronger proof of this than its being effectually employed (as Ammian tells us) to expel that pattern of orthodoxy, the great Athanasius, from the patriarchal throne of Alexandria? The same historian notices that under the timid Valens it sufficed to establish this capital charge if the suspected person had been seen walking at night-time in the neighbourhood of any cemetery, where he might possibly have gone to hold conference with the demons of the dead.

But to exhibit the true source and nature of these "Gnostic" inscriptions I shall transcribe a spell from the "Magic Papyrus," to which I shall have occasion frequently to refer. The author of this wondrous Manual of Necromancy was unmistakably of the old unmixed Egyptian religion, and very probably a priest of Isis. Nevertheless, he not merely employs the very words found on our talismans, but even the same peculiar arrangement of them. Any one desirous of preserving so valuable a charm in a more durable material than papyrus or lead, had only to order a lapidary to copy it for him upon a jasper, and a regular "Gnostic" monument would have been bequeathed to our times. The maker having carefully specified the virtues of composition, gives us to understand the value of similar forms still existing on stones: VII. "Take a sheet of hieratic paper, or a leaden plate, and an iron link of a chain (κρίκος), and place the link upon the paper, and mark both inside and out with a pen the form of the link. Then having described the circular outline of the link, write upon the same outline, inscribing upon the paper the name and the characters on the outside, and inside the thing which you wish *not* to happen, or that a man's mind may be bound so as not to do such and such a thing. Then placing the link upon its outline which you have made, and taking up the parts outside the

outline, sew up the link with thread so as to completely conceal it, piercing through the characters with the pen; and when you wish to bend, say—'I bend such a one not to speak to such a one, let him not resist, let him not contradict, let him not be able to look me into the face, or to answer me, but let him be subject unto me so long as this link is buried. And again I bind his mind, his senses, his desires, his actions, that he may be sluggish towards all men, in case (a certain woman) marries such a one,' or else, 'in order that she may *not* marry such and such a one.' Common (*i.e.*, to be said in Greek).

"Then taking it to the grave of one untimely deceased, dig four fingers deep, and put it in and say—'O departed Spirit, whosoever thou art, thou art *this;* I deliver unto thee such a one, that he may not do such and such a thing.' Then cover it up and depart. And you will do this best when the moon is on the wane. The words to be written within the circle are these: ΑΡΟΑΜΑΘΡΑΕΡΕϹ : ΚΙΓΑΛΑΧ·· ΕΖΑΝΤΑ · ΙΑΡΟΤΝΗ · ΑΚΗ · ΙΑΩ · ΔΑΡΤΝΚΩ · ΜΑΝΙΗΛ · ΜΗ ΠΡΑΧΘΗΤΩ ΤΟ ⏄ (δεῖνα) ΠΡΑΓΜΑ ΕΦ' ΟϹΟΝ ΧΡΟΝΟΝ ΚΕΧΩϹΤΑΙ Ο ΚΡΙΚΟϹ ΟΤΤΟϹ ('*Let not such and such a thing be done for so long a time as this link is buried*'). Bind it with knots, making a twist of them, and so deposit it. The link may also be cast into a disused well, or into the grave of one dead before his time. And after the characters, write also these words below the link as a plinth (or a *square*): ΑΡΧΟΟΛ ΛΑΙΑΑΜ ϹΕΜΕϹΙΛΑΜΦ ΑΜΜΟΦΟΡΙΩΝ ΙΩΑΗ ΦΘΟΤΘ ΕΩΦΡΗ Ο ΜΕΛΙϹΤΟϹ ΔΑΙΜΩΝ ΙΑΩ ϹΑΒΑΩΘ ΑΡΒΑΘ ΙΑΩ ΛΑΙΛΑΜ ΟϹΟΡΝΟΦΡΙ ΕΜΦΡΗ ΦΡΗ ΦΘΑ ΧΡΩΙΩ ΙΑΩ ΒΑΒ-ΟΤΡΗ ΘΙΜΑΜΕΝ ΦΡΗ ΒΕ ΝΟΤϹΙ ϹΑΒΑΩΘ ΒΑΡΒΑΘΙΑΩ ΘΑΧΡΑ ΟΤΧΕΕΘ ΕϹΟΡΝΩΦΡΙ, and the inscription at the top of the page, which also you must place within it.

ΙΑΕΩΒΑΦΡΕΝΕΜΟΤΝΟΘΙΛΑΡΙΚΡΙΦΙΑΕΤΕΑΡΙΦΙΚΡΑĀΙΘΟΝΦΤΟ ΜΕΝΡΦΑΒΑΩΕΑΙ.

(This spell is repeated at the foot of the page, inscribed in one continuous circle, to show that it reads either way. It occurs also on a gem (Brit. Mus.) followed by ΔΟΤΑΙ ΧΑΡΙΝ ΙΕΡΩΝΙΜΑ ΠΡΟϹ ΠΑΝΤΑϹ, "Give to Hieronima favour in the sight of all men": and also on another, figured by Montfaucon, II. pl. 164—a proof of the importance attached to it at the time.)

"And the same arrangement may be written upon a leaden plate; and having put the link within it, fold it over and seal with gypsum, and afterwards the base beneath, upon which ΙΑΕΩ as before directed, and also these words: ΒΑΚΑΞΤΧΤΧ ΜΕΝΕΒΑ ΙΧΤΧ ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ ΑΤ, "Prevent such and such a thing." But in the *original* the Names are found as follows: ΑΜΦΟΟΛ ΛΑΙΛΑΜ ϹΕΜΕϹΙΛΑΜ ΙΑΕΩ ΛΟΒΑΚΑΞΙΧΤΧ ΑΡΑϹΑΞΑΤ ΑΡΧΩΜ ΕΛΑΧ ΜΕΝΕϹΙΛΑΜ ΙΑΕΩ ΟΤΩ ΒΑΚΑΞΙΧΤΧ ΑΡΑϹΑΞΩΤ, "Prevent such and such a thing."

ΚΙϹΝΥΒ
ΒΙΕΝΥΒ□ϸΗΓ□ϸ□□ϸΗΙΧΝ□ΥΒΙϹΝΑΑΒ
ΔΑϸΗ □ϸ□ΜΑ

On the reverse of a Chnuphis plasma (Lewis Collection), ΚΙϹΝΥΘ and ΝΑΒΙϹ (*prophet*) occur, as also on the Bosanquet gem. The last words may be corrupt Greek, "Restore the sight"; the object of the talisman.

Fig. 10.

III. The True Abraxas Gems.

Having in the preceding sections cleared the ground of the innumerable usurpers of the title "Abraxas gems," we can conveniently proceed to consider the wondrous Sigil, the invention whereof is universally ascribed to Basilides himself. And for this asumption there are very good grounds, for it is certain that such a Sigil never occurs executed in a style that bespeaks a date anterior to the grand heresiarch's, the first years of the second century.

This figure, which has given its name to the whole family, is designed to represent the god "Abraxas," for so his name is written invariably on the gems, although the Latin Fathers to suit the genius of their own language have transposed the final letters. The etymology and *value* of the name require a whole section to themselves, so deep are the mysteries that they contain.

The purpose of the composition was to express visibly, and at once, the 365 Æons, emanations from the First Cause, whose number was probably first suggested by its own numerical signification, and consequently the figure may be taken as a speaking type of the *Pleroma*, the *one* embracing *all* within itself, an idea fittingly embodied in a name containing the sum of all its component powers. To shadow forth therefore this grand doctrine, the image in question is a "Pantheus," or combination of many discordant attributes expressing the amalgamation of many different ideas in one and the same figure. Hence he is depicted with the head of a *cock*, sacred to Phœbus, or else of a *Lion*, symbol of Mithras and Belus; his body, *human* and clad in armour, indicates his guardian power, for he is a Virtue Militant "putting on the whole armour of God"; his legs are the sacred *asps*, types of the Agathodæmon, likewise indicating *swiftness*; for in this way, says Pausanias, was Boreas pictured upon the Coffer of Cypselus: in his right hand he brandishes a *scourge*, the Egyptian badge of sovereignty; on

his left arm a *shield*, usually emblazoned with some word of power, declaring his perpetual warfare against the rebellious Angels, the "Gods of death." Bellermann has proposed with much ingenuity an interpretation of this Pantheus in the more spiritual sense better consonant with the esoteric teaching of its inventor. According to him, the whole represents the Supreme Being, with his Five great Emanations, each one pointed out by means of an expressive emblem. Thus, from the human body, the usual form assigned to the Deity, forasmuch as it is written that God created man in his own image, issue the two supporters, *Nous* and *Logos*, symbols of the inner sense and the quickening understanding, as typified by the serpents, for the same reason that had induced the old Greeks to assign this reptile for an attribute to Pallas. His head—a cock's—represents *Phronesis*, the fowl being emblematical of foresight and vigilance. His two hands bear the badges of *Sophia* and *Dynamis*, the shield of Wisdom, and the scourge of Power.

This Pantheus is invariably inscribed with his proper name, ΙΑΩ, and his epithets, ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ and ΣΑΒΑΩΘ, and often accompanied with invocations such as, ΣΕΜΕΣ ΕΙΛΑΜ, "The Eternal Sun"; ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΛΒΑ, "Thou art our Father" (sometimes curtailed, but generally so arranged as to read the same both ways); or ΑΔΟΝΑΙ, "The Lord."*

In all this a further relationship to the ancient idea of the Sun-god is readily to be discovered. Phœbus, as the god of day, is similarly furnished with a *whip*, and the *serpent*, according to the Egyptians, hieroglyphically expressed his tortuous course through the Zodiac. "Adonai" was the Syrian title of the Sun, whence *Adonis* or *Thammuz* denoted that luminary at the winter solstice. Moreover, the Gnostic epithets above are the very words composing that "short prayer," from the use of which at all sacrifices Macrobius (I. 23) makes out that the influence of the Sun is the Power supreme over all: "O Sun, Father of All, Spirit of the world, Strength of the world, Light of the world!" But the God adored under the name of

* Besides these regular titles, others are occasionally used, of unknown import. Thus a well-engraved Abraxas figure (John Evans) has over his head ΒΙCΤΥC, below his feet ΕΙCΙΤ.

"Abrasax" is clearly shown by the Bosanquet jasper (more particularly described elsewhere), exhibiting the Pantheus in the very car, and attitude of Phœbus, and by the Alexandrian coin of Hadrian presenting Serapis similarly engaged. That the latter was the Solar deity, all mythologists were agreed; and this identity of action would lead one to suspect that "Abrasax" was no more than the *mystic* name of the tutelary god of Alexandria.

The older Chnuphis was occasionally (though rarely) erected with Abraxas on the same talisman; an example of which is offered in one of the most remarkable of the class ever brought under my notice. It was brought from Bombay by a Jew (1874), and sold to M. Gaston Feuardent, whence it came into the possession of the Rev. S. S. Lewis.

Red jasper of fine quality, $1\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ inch, with figure of Abraxas, holding whip and shield, engraved in unusually good style upon the convex face. Round the edge, beginning over the head, runs continuously,

ΦΑΝΑ✲ϽΑ. ΑΥΑΑΙΦ
Α⊠ΥΑΨ✲ΑΥΙΑΗΑΙ

at the back of the head, Ρ; under beak, Ι; over right shoulder, ΡΑ (probably *nexus* of ΑΒΑΑΝ); across the field, each side of waist,

ΠΑΝΗΗΙ ΙΗΗΝΑΠ

Again, across field on a level with his loins, on each side,

ΠΥϽ ΕΥΠ

(perhaps *Eoia*, "The Serpent," in Syriac).

Between the serpent legs,

ΑΙΙΥΙΙΜΗΥ

On the other side, which is almost flat, is the Chnuphis Serpent, erect, with the Seven Vowels inserted between the rays of his head. Across the middle of the field,

ΗΑ ΕΙΧ ("Thy God.")

Over his head, three scarabei in a row; to the right, three goats, and three crocodiles above each other; to the left, as many ibises and serpents so arranged.

GNOSTIC PLAQUE.

The most remarkable specimen of the class known to me was obtained (Jan. 1876) from Sambon, a noted *antiquario* at Naples. It is a circular bronze disc, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches (the ancient *palmus*) in diameter, with a small projection to top, perforated for suspension. The surface of the obverse bears a genuine patina, and the characters of the legend have the true antique formation; but, for reasons hereafter to be stated, the reverse strikes me as an addition of later times—not, indeed, a forgery to entrap the antiquarian, but something intended in all good faith to augment the virtues of the original talisman.

The Abraxas-god, advancing to the right, with arms extended crucifix fashion, holding sword and shield, above his head and arms,

ΙΑΘ ΙΑΩ ΑΛΩΝ
ΩΗ.

On each side of figure—

ΗΩ
ΜΑ
ΜΩ
ΩΝ
ΒΑΑ
ΟΛ
ΒΑΛ✲
CΘ
ΕΡ
C

✲

CΕ
ΦΥΛΑΖΟΝ
ΖΩCΙΜ
ΟΝ

The whole inclosed within a coiled serpent.

Reverse: King with hand on breast, seated on throne, seen in front-face. Over his head,

CΦΡΑΓΙC CΑΛΟΜΩΝΟC

On each side of the figure—

ΕΠΗΝΑ
CΥΜΑΗΑ
ΟCΑΛΑΜ
ΑΣΑΒΑ
ΜΕΑΖΑ
Χ
ΟΥC

ΑΒΟ
VAC
ΜΟΤΗΕ
ΝΕΤΕ
ΚΕΝΕ
ΗΗΕ
ΑΑΒ
Λ

Under the footstool, similarly surrounded by the coiled serpent,

Ƶ Ƶ Ƶ

This Solomon is a truly mediæval piece of drawing; the lettering, too, evidently differs from that of the obverse; and as the surface of the plate is fresher on this side, it is probable that the whole has been added upon the empty back of the original plate.

Some legends, following the rule of the famous ΑΒΛΑΘΑΝΑΛΒΑ, read indifferently from either end. A good example occurs on the reverse of a serapis, carried in the *baris* between Sol and Luna.

ΑƐW
ΒΑΦΡΕΜΕ
ΜΟΥΝΟΘΙΑΡ
ΙΚΡΟΙΦΙΑΕΥΕΑΙ
ΦΕΡΚΙΡΑΝΘΟΝ
ΥΟΜΕΝΕΡΦΑ
ΒΟΕΑΙΙ

(Sard, from collection of Mr. Webb Ware, Cork.)

Horus seated in the *baris;* on prow and poop are perched the sacred birds; neatly engraved on dark-green jasper (Pliny's Molochites). On the reverse—

ΧΑΒΡΑΧ
ΦΝΕϹΧΗΡ
ΦΙΧΝΟΦΝΥΡΝ
ΦΜΧΜΕΜΧ

Amongst the various contents of a tomb at Saintes, discovered in 1885, was a *metal* ring set with a heliotrope engraved with the Agathodæmon, furnished with a human trunk, standing. On the reverse a novel formula—

ΧΛΧΧΑ
ΧΙΟΥΧΙΡΟ
ΥΧΑΗΑ

Ruchael, "Spirit of God," is known as the name of an angel; but the other words defy interpretation.

The best executed of such talismans known to me, belongs to Mr. Webb Ware, of Cork. It is an elliptical sard, about 1¾ inches long and wide; engraved very neatly, with Serapis

seated on the Baris, busts of Osiris and Isis on prow and poop; above, ΑΛΔΑ; below, ΒΑΙΝ. On the reverse, finely cut—

ΑΕΩ
ΒΑΦΡΕΝΕ
ΜΟΥΝΟΘΙΛΑΡ
ΙΚΡΙΟΦΙΑΕΒΕΑΙ
ΦΙΡΚΙΡΑΝΘΟΝ
ΥΟΜΕΝΕΡΦΑ
ΚΟΕΑΙ

There is no distinction between Α and Λ in the original, but I have made it where clearly required. The ΑΛΔΑ is a novelty; but many words in the long formula are of common occurrence in other gems.

IV. The God Abraxas as described by the Christian Fathers.

That the Pantheus upon our gems was really intended to picture forth the deity styled "Abraxas" can be established by the indirect evidence of many contemporary writers. Irenæus remarks of the Basilidans, that "they use *images*, incantations, and all other things pertaining unto Magic." Further on (xxiii.) he adds their custom of giving names to their *images* of pretended angels. And, what bears more directly on the subject, Tertullian (*Apol.* xvi.), after laughing at the god of the heretics as "biforme numen" (evidently in reference to the serpent legs, "biformes" being the classical synonym for the Giants similarly equipped), then goes on to say, "They have taken unto themselves gods with wings, or with heads of dogs or lions, or else *serpents from the legs downwards.*" Here we have unmistakeable reference to the Magian, Egyptian, and Mithraic idols so common upon these talismans, and in the last words to the serpent-legged and veritable Abraxas-god.

Lastly, Epiphanius, after stating that Basilides had taught that the Supreme Being—out of whom proceeded Mind, Intelligence, Providence, Strength, and Wisdom—was named Abraxas, proceeds to describe in what manner the idea was embodied by

the heresiarch: "Having taken their vain speculations, he and his followers have converted them into a *peculiar and definite form*, as a foundation for their own erroneous *idolatrous* and fictitious doctrines." Further on he adds: "With respect to their 'Kavlacav,' what person with any understanding would not laugh at their converting a Hebrew word into a *bodily shape* in order to represent their idol; at their personified Principalities; in a word, at their fondness for *images*; whilst through these fancies they sow error in the minds of the ignorant for the furtherance of their disgraceful and lying trade?" Then proceeding, it would appear, to the analysis of the figure itself, he exclaims: "It is a Spirit of deceit, which, like the playing upon a pipe, leads the ignorant into many sins against the Truth. Yea, even his *legs* are an *imitation of the Serpent* through whom the Evil One spake and deceived Eve. For after the pattern of that figure hath the flute been invented for the deceiving of mankind. Observe the figure that the player makes in blowing his flute. Doth he not bend himself up and down to the right and to the left, like unto it (the serpent)? These forms hath the Devil used to support his blasphemy against heavenly things, to destroy with destruction things upon earth, to encompass the whole world, taking captive right and left all such as lend an ear to his seductions."

V. "Abraxas"—Etymology of.

Of this "Great Name," many etymologies have been proposed. Of all these the most satisfactory is perhaps the one offered by Rabbi Abraham Geiger, making it the Grecised form of *Ha-Brachah*, "The Blessing." For there is good reason for believing that the Ξ had the sound of SH, which explains the strange metamorphoris of the Persian "Artashir" into "Artaxerxes." By the same rule the Rabbi interprets the talismanic ΕΛΞΑΙ as representing *El-Chai*, "The Living God." The same interpretation is again confirmed by the true solution (so long sought in vain, and now suggested by Mr. W. A. Wright) of the mighty spell *abracadabra*, which receives a

most fitting sense when rendered by *Ha-Brachah-dabarah*, "Pronounce the Blessing," where "Blessing" stands for the name of the Blessed One, that most potent of exorcisms.

Another derivation, extremely acute, but probably untenable, had been previously offered by Bellermann in the Coptic compound signifying "The Blessed Name," made of the word *ab* or *of*, "let it be," *Rah*, "adore," and *Sax* for *Sadsh*, "name." This formula would agree in a remarkable manner with the regular Jewish synonym for the Ineffable Name Jehovah, viz., *shem Hamephorash*, "The Holy Word"; which the Rabbins compress into "The Name" or "The Word." It is, besides, a singular coincidence that the Egyptian word *Abrak* should be used by Moses (Gen. xli. 43), where Pharaoh commands that Joseph shall ride in his own chariot, and that they shall cry before him *Abrak*, "kneel down!" where the Coptic word is actually retained in the Hebrew text, and not rendered by an equivalent in that language.* A precedent for expressing a sacred title in an unknown tongue is furnished by St. John (Rev. xix. 12): "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and upon his head were many crowns, and he had a *name* written (upon them) that *no man knew* but himself: and he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and his name was called The Word of God." And again (iii. 12): "He that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the *name* of my God, and the *name* of the City of my God."

All this supplies a reason for the occurrence of the word *abra* in so many sacred titles. A very remarkable instance is to be seen in the wall-painting of the tomb of Vincentius and Vibia, in the Catacomb of Prætextatus at Rome. Now this Vincentius is described in his epitaph as priest of *Sabazius*, a title connected with the Iao-worship; and the name *Abracura* is inscribed over the head of the consort of *Dispater*, the two Rulers of the Shades into whose presence Vibia's soul is ushered by Hermes. In the first title, *cura* is plainly the Latinised *κούρη Virgin*,

* Sharpe, however, makes *Abrasax* a pure Egyptian phrase, signifying "Hurt me not," as addressed to the deity represented on the gem.—('Egypt. Mythol.' p. xii.)

the regular synonym for Proserpine, whilst *Abra* seems to have the same deeper meaning in which it was employed by the talisman-makers.

The efficacy of a Mystic Name is set forth in the Book of Enoch (lxviii. 19): "This is the Number of the Kesbal, the principal part of the oath which the Most High dwelling in glory revealed unto the holy ones. Its name is Beka: He spoke to holy Michael to deliver to them the *Secret Name*, that they might understand that secret name and thus remember the oath; and that those who pointed out every secret thing to the children of men might tremble at that Name and oath. This is the power of that oath, for powerful is it and strong. And he established the oath of Abrac by the instrumentality of the holy Michael. These are the secrets of this oath, and by it were they confirmed. Heaven was suspended by it before the world was made for ever. By it has the earth been framed upon the flood, whilst from the concealed parts of the hills the agitated waters proceed forth from the creation unto the end of the world. By this oath the sea has been formed and the foundation of it. . . . By this oath the sun and moon complete their progress, never swerving from the command given to them for ever and ever. By this oath the stars complete their progress. And when their names are called they return an answer for ever and ever . . . And with them he establishes this oath by which their paths are preserved, nor does their progress perish. Great was their joy."

VI. Abraxas—its Numerical Force.

To find out some deep mystery expressed by the *numerical* value of the letters in a name is the grand foundation of the famous science of the Kabbala. Although the Jewish Talmudists now engross all the honour of the discovery, it is but consistent with the known character of that very uninventive race to suspect that they borrowed the first notion from a foreign source—Chaldæa, the real fountain-head of all their spiritual knowledge. The earliest instance that can be quoted

of this way of expressing a name is St. John's so much discussed "Number of the Beast," employed to screen from vulgar curiosity some dangerous secret. What though its analysis has supplied good Protestants like Bishop Newton with a deadly weapon (in their own eyes) against the Pope, after the sum total has been reduced into its integrals Λατεινὸς; yet a prosaic non-controversialist will be more inclined to suspect that the Kabbalistic number shrouds the name of some potentate of the times who had happened to make himself especially formidable to the beholder of the Vision.* But the titles *Iao*, *Abraxas*, and the like, instead of being recent Gnostic *inventions*, were in all likelihood recognised "Holy Names," and borrowed from the most ancient religions of the East. Pliny must be alluding to something of the sort when he mentions with a sneer the miraculous powers ascribed by the Magi to amethysts engraved with the *names of the Sun and Moon*—names certainly from the nationality of his authorities not inscribed in either the Greek or the Latin tongue. In the "Shemesh Eilam," "Adonai," "Abraxas" of these talismans we may reasonably recognise the words of power referred to by the great naturalist.

The Alexandrine Greeks, proceeding upon the axiom that "things equal to the same thing are equal to one another," spied out the sacred number 365 in many Holy Names, and thus proved the identity of the several personages, so denominated, with one another. To give a few examples: the same sum is obtained by adding up the numerals in Μειθρας and in Αβρασαξ; and whether we interpret the latter as "Blessing" or "Holy Word," both are equally applicable to the Persian god. Again, the Egyptians, says Heliodorus (Æth. ix. 22), discovered the same value in Νειλος, appellation of that earliest god and father of their land, entitled in their hymns *Horus* also, properly the name of the Sun.† In the new-coined religions of Egypt, other and stranger mysteries were extracted out of

* Who expressly tells us that "his number is the number of a man"; that is, the sum of the numerical letters in the name of a certain person. The Hebrew characters representing "Cæsar Nero" produce by addition the required sum.

† Amongst the many points of

sacred names by following the old process. Kircher publishes a gem inscribed ΧΝΟΥΜΙΣ · ΡΙ, and supposes, with much apparent reason, the last syllable to be added in order to make up a sum equivalent to χριστὸς = 1480. That most ingenious of the Gnostics, Marcus, based his whole system upon these numerical deductions. According to him, the Saviour calls himself A and Ω, because these letters stand for 801, which is the sum of those in περιστερὰ, the Dove, assumed in virtue thereof for the vehicle of the Holy Ghost. But the profoundest mystery that rewarded his researches is the fact, certainly a very curious coincidence, that all the 24 letters of the Greek alphabet added together yield the exact "number of the Name" Ἰησοῦς = 888. But his own words well deserve to be quoted (Hip. vi. 50): "Now Jesus had this ineffable origin. From the Mother of all things the First Tetrad, proceeded another Tetrad, and there *was* an Ogdoad, whence proceeded the Decad, so there were Eighteen." The Decad therefore having come together with the Ogdoad, after that it had decoupled the same, produced the number Eighty. And again after that it had decoupled the Eighty it begot the number which is Eight hundred, so that the whole number of the letters proceeding from the Ogdoad according to the Decad is eight hundred and eighty and eight—the same is Jesus. For the Name Ἰησοῦς by the value of its letters is the number 888. And, verily, the alphabet of the Greeks has eight monads, and eight decads, and eight hundreds, producing the number 888, which is made up by all the numbers, the same is Jesus. For this cause doth He call himself A and Ω, to set forth his generation from the All." At first sight it will strike the reader, accustomed only to *Arabic* numerals, as a work of incredible laboriousness to discover numerical values, so aptly tallying in different words, of totally different components. But the difficulty was in truth much less than it appears. The Greek, accustomed perpetually to use the letters of his alphabet

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close connexion between Hindoo and Egyptian Mythology is the name of the sacred river, so nearly resembling the Sanscrit *nil*, "blue," referring to the remarkable colour of its waters. "In Nilo cujus aqua *mari similis*," observes Pliny (xxxv. 36), speaking of a picture by Nealces of a naval battle upon that river. The Arabs still distinguish its upper confluents as the *Blue* and the *White* Nile.

indifferently as symbols of *number* and of *sounds*, perceived the two forces at the same glance in every word that caught his eye, and easily estimated the total value of each proper name, more especially when he made it his business to attend to such coincidences. The same operation would be equally familiar to ourselves were our "Arabic" numerals exchanged for the first ten letters of the Roman alphabet, instead of being what they are, the ancient Palmyrene somewhat modified by the wear of ages and a long course of travel.

The use of the *Numerical Value* of Names is remarkably exemplified by a *Midrash*, which makes the 318 men of Abraham's household, with whom he defeated the Five Kings, to be no more than his *one* servant, Eliezer, the numeral letters in whose name exactly make up that sum—a coincidence, though accidental, truly astonishing!

That genuine Gnostic, Dante, employs with great effect this numerical expression of a Name in that most mystical prophecy with which his 'Purgatorio' closes:—

"Ch' io veggio certamente, e però il narro,
A darne tempo già stelle propinque,
Sicuro d' ogni intoppo e d' ogni sbarro,
Nel qual un Cinquecento-dieci-e-cinque,
Messo di Dio, anciderà la fuia,
E quel gigante che con lei delinque."
(Canto xxxiii. 40–45.)

The interpretation whereof is found in the word DVX formed out of the Roman letters, and applying to the "General" of the Ghibelline League, from whom such great things were expected by the poet for the chastisement of the Papacy and the restoration of the Imperial power.

Fig. 11.

THE ABRAXAS RELIGION.

That most philosophic of the Fathers, Hippolytus, commences his account of the systems of Basilides and his successors with this ingenious and appropriate simile: "It behoves all their hearers, as they see that the doctrines of these heretics are like unto a sea tossed into waves by the fury of the winds, to sail by them without heeding them, and to look out for the tranquil harbour for themselves. For that sea of theirs is both full of monsters, and difficult to traverse, and may be likened unto the Sicilian wherein are the fabled Cyclops, Charybdis and Scylla . . . and the rock of the Syrens which the Grecian poets tell how Ulysses sailed it past when he craftily baffled the cruelty of those inhospitable monsters. For the Syrens singing clear and musically used to beguile all sailing by, through the sweetness of their voice seducing them to come to land. Ulysses learning this is said to have stopped with wax the ears of his crew, and having tied himself fast to the mast in this way sailed past the Syrens and overheard all their song. Which same thing it is my advice that all who fall in with these seducers should do, and either to stop his ears, on account of his own weakness, so to sail by unheeded the doctrines of heresies, without even listening to things too easily capable of seducing him by their sweetness, like the melodious Syrens' song, or else faithfully binding himself fast to the Tree of Christ to listen to them without being shaken, putting his trust in that whereunto he hath been tied, and stand fast without wavering."

The Abraxas Deity, his titles, nature and form already having been discussed, it remains now to give a sketch of his great Apostle and his doctrines. To begin with the earliest notice of them—

Clemens Alexandrinus lived in the same city, and in the same century, with *Basilides*, the reputed founder of the Abraxas religion. During some years of that period they were contemporaries, and it is more than probable that Clemens was personally acquainted with Basilides—he being a very remarkable personage of his times. On this account Clemens'

testimony to the character of the Basilidan doctrine deserves infinitely more reliance than the statements of the later Fathers; whilst at the same time he passes a more judicious, and also a more favourable judgment upon its nature. He describes the system as consisting in a constant attention to the soul, and intercourse with the Deity considered as the fountain of universal Love. In his own words, "The Basilidan doctrine consists of *two* parts; the first part busies itself with divine things, and considers what is the First Cause *through* which all, and *without* which nothing is made; of what constitution are the things that pervade, or include, each other: the forces which exist in Nature, and unto what they tend. The other part relates to things human, as to what is Man; what things be consistent or inconsistent with his Nature, what he has to do and to suffer. In this department Basilides includes Virtue and Vice; what is Good, what is Evil, and what is Indifferent." In short we are here reminded of a description of a Buddhist missionary. The amiable but fanciful Clemens, whose own Christianity was no more than a graft upon the congenial stock of his original Platonism, could see very little to blame in the transcendental speculations of Basilides. In his eyes the latter was not a *heretic*, that is, an innovator upon the accepted doctrines of the Catholic Church, but only a theosophic speculator who sought to express old truths by new formulæ, and perhaps to combine the same with the new faith, the divine authority of which he was able to admit without renouncing his own creed—precisely as is the case with the learned Hindoos of our own day.

But far different is the picture of Basilides, as drawn by the pen of bigoted orthodoxy in the two next centuries, after his doctrines had been taken up and carried out to monstrous precision by the swarms of semi-Christian sects that sprung up in the very bosom of the Church. These notices are subjoined in chronological order, for they give in a few words the grand features of the perfected system. Hippolytus has left an excellent analysis of the Basilidan doctrine, well deserving of caceful study, although it is hard to see how it bears out the assertion at the opening, that this *heretic* took his entire system

ready made from Aristotle, with his *genus*, *species* and *individual*, but pretended to have received the same from St. Matthew, who had communicated to him the esoteric doctrines which he alone had received from Christ when on earth. The philosophic Bishop, however, is mild in censure; nay, seems rather captivated by the ingenuity of the Alexandrine mystic. But Tertullian, with no sense of the beauty of a clever piece of sophistry, launches out like a true African barrister: "After this, Basilides the heretic broke loose. He asserted that there was a Supreme God named Abraxas, by whom was created Mind whom the Greeks call *Nous*. From Mind proceeded the Word, from the Word, Providence; from Providence, Virtue and Wisdom; from these two again, Virtues, Principalities and Powers were made; from these infinite productions and emissions of Angels. By these Angels the 365 heavens were created. Amongst the lowest Angels, indeed, and those who made this world, he sets last of all the god of the Jews, whom he denies to be God, affirming that he is one of the Angels." Similarly the still later Jerome has (*Amos III.*): "So Basilides, who called Almighty God by the portentous name of *Abraxas*, saying that the same word according to Greek numeration, and the sum of his annual revolution, are contained in the circle of the Sun, whom the heathen taking the same amount but expressed in different numerical letters call *Mithras;* him whom the simple Iberians worship under the names of *Balsamus* (*Baal-samen*, "Lord of heaven") and *Barbelus* ("Son of Baal"). And that this wondrous title *Abraxas* had long before been applied to the Sun-god in the formulæ of The Mysteries may be inferred from various incidental allusions of ancient writers. Thus Theosebius the philosopher (says Photius, in his 'Life of Isidorus') drove a devil out of a woman by merely invoking over her "the *Rays of the Sun*, and the Name of the God of the Hebrews." The same explanation is much supported by the words of Augustine: "Basilides asserted the number of heavens to be 365, the number of the days in the year. For this reason he used to glorify a *Holy Name*, as it were, that is the word Abraxas, the letters in which, taken according to the Greek method of computation, make up this number."

The Basilidan doctrine of "Emanation" was greatly refined upon by Valentinus, whose muster-roll of the celestial hierarchy shall be given in its proper place. Suffice it here to observe that the entire theory resembles the Brahminical; for in that theogony each Manifestation of the One Supreme Being, regarded by the vulgar as a separate self-existing deity, has a *female partner* the exact counterpart of himself, *through* whom, as through an instrument, he exerts his power—to express which doctrine this other half is styled his *Durga*, "Active Virtue." This last name, "Virtue," actually figures in all the Gnostic lists of Emanations; and the great Æon, Pistis-Sophia, in her second "Confession" perpetually upbraids herself for having quitted her male Σύζυγος, *partner*, in her proper habitation, to go in quest of the Supernal Light: whilst she equally reproaches *him* for not descending into Chaos to her aid. The system of Dualism, in fact, pervades the whole of that wondrous revelation.

Brahminical inspiration is possible in many other points of the doctrine of Basilides, as will appear by the following extracts from Irenæus—whose judgment was not warped, like that of Hippolytus, by the mania for deriving his system from the Aristotelian. Basilides (according to him) lived at Alexandria under Trajan and Hadrian (the first half of the second century), and commenced life as a student of the *Oriental Gnosis*—an epithet sufficiently indicating the source of that philosophy. Being converted to Christianity he attempted, like many others, to combine his new faith with his old, for the explanation of things both spiritual and natural. To do this he invented a terminology and symbolism of his own. In the promulgation of his peculiar notions concerning God and the Divine attributes—the Word, the Creation, the Emanation of spirits and worlds, the Architect of the universe, and the multifarious forces of Nature—he took the same road with his contemporary Saturninus in Syria. His system was a combination of Christian, Jewish, Persian and Egyptian notions, but the entire composition was moulded by the spirit of the Oriental Gnosis. These tenets their author zealously promulgated. For many years he taught in the school of Alexandria; he was also a most prolific writer. Clemens says he published twenty-four

volumes of "Interpretations upon the Gospels," besides "Odes" and "Spiritual Songs"; all of which have perished. The doctrines he thus disseminated his contemporary Irenæus represents in the following manner :—

"Basilides in order to invent something more refined and plausible in the Gnostic speculative philosophy pushed his investigations even into the Infinite. He asserted that God, the uncreated eternal Father, first brought forth *Nous* or Mind; and Mind, the *Logos*, Word; this in turn, *Phronesis*, Intelligence; whence came forth *Sophia*, Wisdom, and *Dynamis*, Strength." Irenæus understands Basilides as making a Quinternion of Beings or Personal Intelligences *external* to the Godhead: but Bellermann with more reason takes them as signifying personified *attributes* of the Supreme *forms* of his working internally and externally. According to this explanation Basilides would only have borrowed his system from the Kabbala; it is however equally likely that he drew the whole from a much more distant source, and that his "Uncreated" and "Quinternion" stand in truth for the *First* Buddha and the successive *Five*.

"When the uncreated eternal Father beheld the corruption of mankind, he sent his Firstborn, Nous, into the world in the form of Christ, for the redeeming of all that believe in him out of the power of those who fabricated the world—namely, the Demiurgus and his Six sons, the planetary Genii. Nous appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles. This Christ did not die in person, but Simon the Cyrenian, to whom he lent his bodily form, suffered in his stead; inasmuch as the Divine Power, the Nous of the Eternal Father, is not corporeal, and therefore cannot *die*. Whoso therefore maintains that Christ has died is still the bondman of *Ignorance*, but whoso denies the same, he is a freeman, and hath *understood* the purpose of the Father." From this tenet the Basilidans got the opprobrious title of "Docetae" (*Illusionists*). Similarly the pious Brahmins explain away all such of their legends as are inconsistent with our notions of divine dignity by making them all "Maya" (*illusion*). The same is also the doctrine of the Koran (Cap. iv.) upon this point: "And for that they have not believed upon Jesus, and have spoken against Mary a

grievous calumny, and have said, Verily we have slain Christ Jesus, the Son of Mary, the apostle of God; yet they slew him not, neither crucified him, but he was represented by one in his likeness; and verily they were disagreed concerning him, were in a doubt as to this matter, and had no true knowledge thereof, but followed only an uncertain opinion. They did not really kill him, but God took him up unto himself, and God is mighty and wise."

The system just described coincides to a remarkable degree with the Brahminical, where the First Principle produces in succession the Five Powers—Mahasiva, Sadasiva, Rudra, Vishnu and Brahma—who are held by some for mere *attributes* of the Godhead; by others are taken in a materialistic sense for Æther, Air, Fire, Water, Earth. But possibly, as Mosheim so long ago maintained, the whole Gnostic system is derived, not from the Kabbala, nor from the Greek philosophy, but from the theosophy of the Brahmins.

Another circumstance in the Basilidan practice, mentioned by Irenaeus, will receive abundant illustration from the study of these talismans. "Furthermore the sect have invented *proper names* for these Angels, and class them under the *first*, *second*, *third* heavens, and so on. Besides this, they endeavour to explain the names, origin, powers, and Æons of their pretended 365 heavens—similarly they give its own name to the terrestrial sphere, which they say the saviour (whom they call *Kavlacav*) has visited, and then abandoned. Who understands this rightly and knows the Æons with their respective names, the same shall be *invisible* unto, and beyond the power of, those Æons, in the same manner as the Saviour Kavlacav himself was. As the Son of God remained unknown in the World, so must also the disciple of Basilides remain unknown to the rest of mankind, as they know all this, and nevertheless must live amongst strangers, therefore must they conduct themselves towards the rest of the world as beings invisible and unknown. Hence their motto, 'Learn to know all, but keep thyself unknown,'—and for this cause they are accustomed to deny the fact of their being Basilidans. Neither can they be detected as Christian heretics, because they assimilate themselves to all

sects. Their secret constitution however is known to but a few, perhaps to one in a thousand or two in ten thousand. The local situation of their 365 heavens they parcel out just like land-surveyors. Their doctrine is contained in a sacred book, and likewise in *Symbolic Figures*. The Supreme Lord, the Head of all things, they call *Abrasax*, which name contains the number 365."

So much virtue being involved in a perfect knowledge of the names of the Æons, it would be unpardonable not to subjoin them, as far as they can possibly be procured at present and, the following may be taken for their most authoritative roll-call, having been drawn up by Valentinus himself, the profoundest doctor of the Gnosis, and who had elaborated to the highest degree the system first sketched out by Basilides. He arranges them in pairs, male and female, in the order of their successive emanation from Bythos, the pre-existing, eternal Principle. The number of pairs is *fifteen*, or the sacred number Five three times repeated. Their names, it will be seen, are Hebrew words, the *va* preceding some of the female powers being merely the copulative "and." Matter supposes Valentinus to have been of Jewish origin, although born at Alexandria. Tertullian states that he was first of all a Platonist, then a convert to Christianity, but having been disappointed in his aspirations to a bishopric he founded a religion of his own.

1. Ampsiu, Ouraan = Depth, Silence.
2. Bucua, Thartun = Mind, Truth.
3. Ubucua, Thardedia = Reason, Life.
4. Metaxas, Artababa = Man, Church.
5. { Udua, Casten / Udu, Vacastene } = Comforter, Faith.
6. Amphian, Essumen = Fatherly, Hope.
7. Vannanin, Lamer = Motherly, Charity.
8. Tarde, Athames = Eternal, Intelligence.
9. Susua, Allora = Light, Beatitude.
10. Bucidia, Damadarah = Eucharistic, Wisdom.
11. Allora, Dammo = Profundity, Mixture.
12. Oren, Lamaspechs = Unfading, Union.
13. Amphiphuls, Emphsboshbaud = Self-born, Temperance.
14. Assiouache, Belin = Only begotten, Unity.
15. Dexariche, Massemo = Immovable, Pleasure.

Epiphanius has evidently copied one pair (5) twice over,

misled by a slight difference of spelling, and thus adds one pair to the proper fifteen.

It will be very instructive to compare this Valentinian system of Emanation, which makes all to proceed in pairs, male and female, out of the First Cause, with that Indian theosophy which this very feature indicates as its real source, in the latter, every Principle is divided into a male and female Energy, each exactly alike the other—"the same, distinguished by their sex alone." Each deity exerts his power through the agency of his female Principle or *Sacti*, which in turn possesses a *Váhan* "vehicle," that is an instrument or attribute, which is fixed and represented in a material form. Of the Persons in the Supreme Triad the Sactis and their Váhans * are :—

1. Of Brahma, Saraswati, goddess of harmony and the arts (the Jewish *Wisdom*); her váhan is a swan, or goose. (Hence Juno's Capitoline bird, afterwards explained by an historical fiction.)

2. Of Vishnu, Lakshmí, goddess of Prosperity, she has the title of Kamalá, "lotus-bearer;" her váhan is Garuda, the man-eagle. Vishnu in one Avatár takes the name "Varáha," and his consort "Varáhi," in which case her váhan is a buffalo.

3. Of Siva, the Changer or Destroyer, the Sacti is Bhaváni, goddess of *fecundity*, and consequently of *death*, for the first implies the second "Nascentes morimur, finisque ab origine pendet."

Nothing perishes, things only take a new form called by the *ignorant* Death. (Compare the title "Gods of death," which the Ophites were so fond of giving to the "Gods of the Nativity," the astral genii ruling the horoscope). Bhaváni's appropriate vehicles are the Bull, emblem of generation, and the Tiger, of destruction.

And before going further I cannot resist observing how these names and symbols manifest the far-spreading influence of the nations they embody. The Sassanian queens in their gem

* It might even be suggested that Indian influence shines through the whole Apocalypse. The Four Beasts (borrowed it is true from the First Vision of Ezekiel) are these Váhans, ministers of the Divine Will. Later times assigned each to an evangelist. The Four-and-twenty Elders had their prototypes in the Saints to the same number of the Buddhist theology; the "sea of glass or crystal" is the vast crystal block suspended in the highest heaven, the shrine of the Supreme Being; absorption into whom is the true object of the believer.

portraits generally bear the lotus in the hand,* "Varanes" is a common name for the kings of that line, and the Brahminic Bull, the commonest of all signet devices with their subjects. But as the dominions of the later Persian kings extended as far as the Indus, Hindoo princesses doubtless entered their harems and communicated their own religion to their children.

Again, many of these Sanscrit titles bear a resemblance, certainly not accidental, to words frequently occurring in the Gnostic inscriptions. Thus, "Sumitri," wife of Vishnu in his seventh Avatar may explain Σουμαρτα; and "Nátha," a title of Vishnu and Crishna, the equally common Ναυτιτα; "Isa," lord, feminine, "Isi," *lady*, is perhaps even the origin of *Isis*; and "Nila," *dark-blue*, and epithet of Parvati, is more appropriately transferred to Father Nilus. Vishnu in infancy as Narayana floating in his "Vat," leaf boat over the face of the waters, and coloured all over *blue*, may be compared to the child Horus wafted in the *baris*. The most ancient of all creeds having, as above shown, made the lotus the symbol of Plenty, the reason becomes obvious for the introduction of its seed-vessels, always mistaken for poppyheads, amongst the wheatears in the cornucopia of Ceres.

The above quoted Σουμαρτα seems to have been applied by the Gnostics to the Sun-god, for Montfaucon gives (Pl. 157) a figure of Sol so inscribed, with χεροῦβι on the reverse, a manifest invocation to all the angelic host. And as the protection of this celestial hierarchy is so perpetually sought by our talisman-makers in their "voluntary humility and worshipping of angels," I subjoin the names of the Hindoo Guardians of the "Jehabs," quarters of the world, which may perhaps lurk in their Grecised form amongst these interminable strings of titles.

E.	Indra.	N.W.	Váyu.
S.E.	Agni.	N.	Kuvera.
S.	Yama.	N.E.	Jsána.
S.W.	Nirriti.	Above.	Brahma.
W.	Varuna.	Below.	Nága.

Of the centre, Rudra.

* In the character of Kamalá, as the later Greek, and the Roman ladies in that of Isis.

THE INEFFABLE NAME IN THE HINDOO FORM.

We have already seen how inportant a part the notion of an "Ineffable Name," denoting the inconceivable Supreme, plays in the machinery of the Gnosis, and here again the original idea is to be found fully developed in the practice of the Brahmins. This awful name emblazoned in *three* Sanscrit letters within a cartouche formed by a coiled serpent (that normal inclosure for a Holy Name in Gnostic art) * is fittingly borne up by the elephant headed Ganesa, god of *Wisdom.* The word being triliteral is rather AUM than OM, as usually written in English. It is never to be uttered aloud, but only mentally by the devout. Of the characters, A signifies the Creator, U the Preserver, M the Destroyer; that is, the Triad Brahma-Vishnu-Siva. "If pronounced aloud, the sound much resembles *Amen* as drawled out by a country parish clerk. In fact it is used for "Angiekar," *So be it!* in token of approbation ("Moor, Hindoo Pantheon).† And here a very curious analogy is to be pointed out in the assertion of the Talmudists that the word *Amen* if shouted aloud is of power to open the gates of Heaven. In the Pistis-Sophia the "Three Amen," and again the "Four Amen," are repeatedly mentioned amongst the other Mysteries revealed by the Saviour in his esoteric teaching. On this account the word may be

* As the Pistis-Sophia informs us, "the disk of the sun was a great dragon having his tail in his mouth," the meaning of this figure whereon the sacred word is emblazoned becomes sufficiently obvious.

† OM MANI PADHVM "Glorification of the Deity," is the Thibetian Confession of Faith, engraved on stone tablets set up everywhere over the country; and everlastingly chanted by the Lamas as they tell their beads. (Cooper's 'Travels of a Pioneer,' p. 208). Huc mentions that the Lamas assert that the doctrine contained in these words is immense, and that the whole life of man is not sufficient to measure its depth and extent. Knox ('Overland through Asia') describes the ruined "Monastery of Eternal Repose," built at the junction of the Augoon with the Amoor by an emperor of the Yuen dynasty to commemorate his visit to that region. On the summit of the cliff are three columns, 5 to 8 feet high of marble granite, and porphyry and granite, bearing inscriptions commemorating this foundation, and also this formula in Chinese, Mongolian and Thibetan.

suspected to have some connexion with the Hindoo Sacred Name, unless indeed Valentinus had got it nearer home, from the four "Amenti," guardians of the dead, and sons of Osiris. The common explanation that "Amen" signifies *Truth* in some Eastern dialect, does not seem to rest on good foundation. The Kabbalist Marcus discovered a great mystery in Αμην, taken numerically, the number Ninety-nine became formed by the union of the Eleven and the Nine and *therefore* set forth by the parables of the piece of silver, and the ninety and nine sheep, "which is the reason why we use 'amen' in prayers."

Other Hindoo titles of the Deity are "Tat" and "Sat" = Virtue. These are recognisable in the Egyptian gods Tat or Hermes, and Sate, Truths. It is likewise more than probable that the mighty AUM itself often lies enshrouded amidst the lines of vowels filling our talismans. Certainly the Praun calcedony (No. 517) bearing on one side the Delphic Apollo in a good style of art, or the other (by a later hand) a man dancing with his apron filled with fruits, presents in its legend πυρσπαιοω αουμ ολει, the Sanscrit triliteral in the only form in which Greek characters could express the sound.

The origin of this Ineffable Name is thus related ('Inst. Menu.' ii. 370) Brahma milked out as it were from the three Vedas the letter A, the letter U, and the letter M; together with the three mysterious words "Bhur," "Bhavah," "Swar," or Earth, Sky and Heaven. From the three Vedas also the Lord of Creation, incomprehensibly exalted successively milked out the three Treasures of the ineffable text, beginning with the word "Tat," and entitled the "Savatri," or Gáyatrí. A priest who shall know the Veda, and pronounce to himself both morning and evening that syllable and that holy text preceded by the Three words shall attain that sanctity which the Veda confers: and a "*twice born*" man who shall a thousand times repeat those Three apart from the multitude, shall be released in a month even from a great offence, as a snake from its slough. The Three great immutable words preceded by the Triliteral syllable and followed by the Gáyatri which consists of three measures, must be considered as the *mouth*, or principal part of the Veda." In

this doctrine lies the very origin of all talismanic inscriptions, for their essence is the stringing together of sacred names. Nay more, the actual Three words, disguised by Coptic pronunciation, or purposely sealed from profane eyes by a duplication of vowels, very probably exist in the midst of certain Gnostic formulæ. In the spell of Battus, hereafter to be quoted, words of the same sense as the Hindoo Three do in reality occur.

The Gáyatrí or holiest verse of the Vedas is: "Let us adore the supremacy of the Divine Sun, the Godhead, who illuminates all, who recreates all, from whom all proceed, unto whom all must return, whom we invoke to direct our progress aright in our progress towards the Holy Seat." Another is; "Earth, Sky, Heaven; Let us meditate upon that most excellent Light and Power, of that most generous, sportive, and resplendent Sun, that it may guide our intellects." In all this there is something that irresistibly reveals the Gnostic invocations whenever they can be interpreted, and the "Divine Sun" finds its counterpart in the "Shemesh Eilam" so perpetually repeated.

This Gáyatrí is contained in the confession of faith of the Brahmin. "This new and excellent praise of thee O, splendid playful Sun (*Pushan*) is offered by us to thee. Be gratified by this my speech: approach this craving mind as a fond man seeks a woman. May that Sun who contemplates and looks into all worlds be our Protector! Let us meditate on the adorable light of the Divine Ruler (*Savitri*); may it guide our intellects. Desirous of food we solicit the gift of the splendid Sun, who should be studiously worshipped. Venerable men, guided by the understanding, salute thee, Divine Sun, with oblations and praise."

Moor hereupon makes the very pertinent remark: "It is difficult to conjecture why this text should be so studiously kept secret, for its exposition, unconnected with any idea of mystery, and affectation of profundity, does not appear likely to have the effect so dreaded by all priests of guiding the intellect of mankind to the discovery of Truth."

As already remarked our Gnostic formulae when expressed in Greek have a spirit and a rhythm that strikes the ear as the echo of these primitive invocations; witness the legend upon the

plasma described by Creuzer (Archeol. iii. last plate). Within the serpent-formed cartouche is an inscription of many lines, the first half an undecypherable medley of letters, which like Marcus' thirty syllabic appellation of the Supreme Tetrad, must express the name of the Unknown God, who in the following portion is invoked as: "The Primal Father, incorporeal, pervading all things, self-existing, the seal of Solomon:" then come more mystic epithets ending with "lion-headed," evidently the Mithraic figure of that kind. The declaration that the unknown legend is the "Seal of Solomon" is extremely interesting, as showing the early date of the celebrity attained by that most famous of talismans; which, be it remembered, was reported to derive its virtue from the mighty throne of God engraven on the gem.

Many further analogies between the two theosophies may be detected in the Hindoo forms of worship published by Moor. Of the Persons in the Supreme Triad, Brahma represents the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Destroyer. But the last is more truly the Changer, all *death* being only *change*. Siva therefore in one of his characters becomes identified with Yama, god of the Shades. Now, seeing that the first two Persons are symbolised by the elements Fire and Water, the analogy of the Hellenic Triad, Zeus, Poseidon, Hades, becomes at once apparent. Here also we find the originals of the "Great Τριδυνάμεις," who hold so high a place in the hierarchy of the Pistis-Sophia.

The famous Inscription of Buddha-Gaya, Bengal, dated the year 1005 of the era of Vikramaditya (B.C. 57) contains this remarkable passage: "Amaradiva [son of Sandracottus] having heard this voice caused an image of the Supreme Spirit, Buddha, to be made; and he worshipped it, according to the law, with perfumes, incense, and the like, and he thus admired [magnified] the Name of that Supreme Being, an Incarnation of a portion of Vishnu. Reverence be unto thee in the form of Buddha; reverence be unto thee, Lord of the Earth! Reverence be unto thee an Incarnation of the Deity, and the Eternal One; Reverence be unto thee O God, in the form of the God of Mercy, the Dispeller of pain and trouble, the Lord of all things, the

Deity who overcomes the sins of the *Kali yug* (Iron Age), the Guardian of the universe, the emblem of Mercy towards all them that sue thee—OM, the Possessor of all things in vital form, Thou art Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesa (Siva); Thou art the Lord of the universe; Thou art the proper *form* of all things,* moveable and immoveable, the Possessor of the whole. And thus I adore thee. Reverence be unto thee the Bestower of Salvation; Reverence be unto thee the Destroyer of the Evil Spirit, Kesi;† O Damadara shew me favour! Thou art he who resteth upon the face of the Milky Ocean, and who lieth upon the serpent Sesha. Thou art Trivikrama, who at three strides encompasseth the earth; I adore thee, who art celebrated by a thousand names, and under various *forms*, in the shape of Buddha, the God of Mercy; be propitious, O thou Most High! Having thus worshipped the Guardian of mankind, he became like one of the just. He joyfully caused a holy temple to be built of a wonderful construction, and therein were set up the *Divine Feet* of Vishnu, for ever Purifier of the sins of mankind; the images of the Pandus, and the *Descents* of Vishnu (Avatars); and in like manner of Brahma and the rest of the divinities." (Hind. Panth. p. 223.)

It may here be observed how extensively this symbol of the *Divine Foot* has pervaded the religions of the West. Feet either in relief or *in cavo*, cut in stone, are common about Hindoo temples; according to tradition they are memorials of suttees, the self-sacrificing widow having mounted from that stone upon the pyre. This usage supplies the connection of the symbol with Serapis, the translated Yama, god of Hades. Compare the colossal Foot dedicated to the Serapis of Alexandria, as his special attribute, and recently exhumed from the ruins of his temple.‡ It is richly sandalled, and on the top sits enthroned the god himself, with his attendants Cerberus and the Serpent, *Tricasa*

* Meaning the pre-existing Type, the Platonic *Idea*, the Persian Ferouher, the Rabbinical Adam-Kadmon—all springing from this source.

† This explains the title of the deity so often put on our talismans, Γιγαντορήκτης.

‡ The religious importance of the symbol is attested by an Alexandrian coin of Commodus, having for reverse this same Foot, with the bust of Serapis placed on the section of the leg. (Feuardent, 'Egypte Ancienne,' pl. xxvii.).

and *Sesha* in Grecian disguise. The same Foot, winged and girt with the Serpent placed between two seated lions, is cut on the altar inscribed "Deo Sarapi M. Vibius Onesimus ex visu" (Montfaucon, pl. 122). The same idea produced in Ceylon the print of Adam's foot upon the summit of the Peak, bearing his name, whence he had ascended to his Creator, and equally, in the very metropolis of Christianity, that of Christ himself stamped in the basalt paving-stone of the Via Appia, still worshipped in the church and entitled, "Domine quo vadis?"

An ancient silver plate, found in a pit at Islamabad, at the northern end of the Bay of Bengal, records the hallowing of the site of a projected temple there in the deposit in that pit of 120 small bronze images called "Tahmudas," twenty of larger size, "Languda," one large in stone, "Langudagari," and a brass vessel containing two of the bones of "Thacur." This last title, "Noble,"* is the regular style of a god, or a deified mortal. In mediæval ecclesiastical usage (which probably still continues) it was indispensable for the consecration of any altar in a church that a relic (bone) of some Saint should have been deposited under its base. The same silver plate contains this account of the birth and infancy of Buddha. This coincidence, if accidental is very curious. "When Buddha Avatar descended from the region of souls, and entered the body of Mahamaya, the wife of Soontala Danna, Raja of Kailas, her womb suddenly assumed the appearance of clear transparent crystal in which Buddha appeared, beautiful as a flower, kneeling, and reclining on his hands. When born he had on his head two *feet*, and on his hands the marks of wheels. Brahma attending at the birth received the infant in a golden vessel, and delivered him unto Indra."

This intimate connection of the theosophies of India and Greece was originally (before the period of direct commerce) kept up through the medium of the Persian Magi, as the classical writers themselves show by casual but trustworthy allusions. Their notices were till lately reckoned, amongst the other fictions of "Graecia Mendax," but better acquaintance with Sanscrit and Pehlevi records have revealed their truth.

* Exactly answering to the ancient *Divus*, the Catholic *Saint*.

For it is now accepted as certainly proved by the oldest portions of the Zendavesta (the "Gathas," or hymns) that the primitive religion of the whole Aryan race, previous to the great division, was a simple worship of the Powers of Nature. This religion was reformed by Zoroaster, who retained the old names for his Angels, but superadded the idea of the One Supreme.

Ammian in his account of Julian's Persian expedition, gives the following curious, though oddly blundered, details upon this subject (xxiii. 6). "In these tracts are situated the fertile lands of the *Magi* [in Media], concerning whose profession and pursuits, since we have come upon them, it will be fitting to give here some brief information. Plato, that greatest authority upon celebrated doctrines, states that the Magian religion, known by this mystic name of 'Machagestia,' is the most uncorrupted form of worship in things divine. To the philosophy of this religion, Zoroastres, a Bactrian, in primitive times, made many additions drawn from the Mysteries of the Chaldæans, as did still later Hystaspes, a very learned prince, father of Darius. This King Hystaspes, when he was boldly penetrating into the unknown regions of *Upper India*, had come upon a certain wooded solitude, the tranquil silence of which is occupied by those incomparable sages, the Brachmans. Instructed by their teaching in the science of the motions of the world and heavenly bodies, and also in *pure religious rites* as far as he was able to gather them—of the notions thus acquired he transfused a certain proportion into the creed of the Magi. The latter coupling these doctrines with their own peculiar science of foretelling the future, have handed down the whole through their descendants to succeeding ages. Thenceforth, in the course of many generations to the present time, a multitude, sprung from one and the same stock, dedicates itself to sacred offices. It is said they preserve unextinguished the Sacred Fire which first of all fell down from heaven, a portion whereof used always to be carried before the kings of Asia as a good omen. The number of persons so descended was at the first but small, and they were exclusively employed by the Persian kings for the performance of religious services. It was con-

sidered a great offence to approach the altar, or to touch the sacrifice, before a Magus, after reciting the appointed prayers, had poured upon it the preliminary libation. But through gradual increase they are grown into the name and dimensions of a distinct people, and inhabit villages unprotected by walls, being allowed to follow their own laws, being respected on account of their religious character. It was from this race of men that the seven, as ancient history records, usurped the Persian throne upon the death of Cambyses, and were crushed by the conspiracy of that Darius who gained the kingdom through the neighing of his horse." The worthy, but pedantic old soldier, in his anxiety to show off his historical reading, has committed certain very ludicrous blunders in this account. The father of Darius was no "ancient king of Persia," but merely governor of that *province* (ἔπαρχος) under Cambyses (Her. iii. 70). His name, derived from "Gushtasp," the planet Venus, was doubtless common enough wherever Magism was the established religion. And yet more ludicrously does Ammian convert the *one* Magian usurper, Smerdis, into *seven*, the actual number of the Persian nobles who put him down. Nevertheless, the tradition has great value, as proving the previous existence of the Magi in a community of diviners and seers (like the ancient Jewish fraternities, "Sons of the Prophets,") and the subsequent modification of their doctrines by the importation of Brahminical ideas, following upon the conquest of Indian provinces. Such being the case, one need not be surprised at finding *Sassanian* kings named after Hindoo deities, like the numerous *Varanes* (from "Varani," Vishnu's title) just as others of their line assume that of the proper Persian god, Ormuzd, in the form of that favourite royal appellation, Hormisdas (Ahoromasdi).

ABRAXAS-GEMS, THEIR MATERIALS, WORKMANSHIP, AND NATURE.

Following the axiom, "that the body is more than the raiment," the foregoing chapters have been devoted to the consideration of the notions which our talismans have *invested* with visible form. These visible forms, therefore, their materials, and manufacture, now come before us for explanation —a wide field for curious research, and extending into many diverse regions of Archæology.

The *genuine* Abraxas-gems, that yet fill our cabinets, came originally for the most part out of Egypt; others, as their differing style shows, from Asia; others again from Syria, where many Basilidans had established themselves at an early period. Amongst these philosophising semi-Christian sects the figure of Abraxas was held in high esteem. "They used it (says Bellermann) as a *Teacher* in doctrine, in obedience to whom they directed their transcendental researches and mystic instruction; as a *Token* and a *Password* amongst the initiated, to show that they belonged to the same fraternity; as an *Amulet* and a *Talisman*, and lastly as a *Seal* to their documents."

Gnostic intagli are almost the sole productions of the Glyptic Art, during the time it was dying out, all through the last two centuries of the Western Empire, if we except a few rude figures of the goddess Roma, Victories, and Eagles made for legionary rings. As may easily be supposed the art displayed in these designs is at its lowest ebb, being itself a degenerate successor to the debased Egyptian school of Alexandria.* The

* Their barbarism, however, is often in advance of that of their real period. A convincing example is the one found in the great treasure-trove of Tarsus, where the latest coins went no later than Gordian III. It was a black hematite, with a four-winged, sceptre-holding Æon, reverse Venus Anadyomene, with her usual title ΑΡΩΡΙΦΡΑCIC, scratched in so rude a style that one would have placed its execution three centuries later, but for the company in which it was found. Another point of interest was its retaining the original setting—a cable-mounted frame, with loop, of massy gold—proof of the value placed upon its potency. (Franks Collection.)

engraving seems to have been entirely executed by means of a coarse *wheel*, like that characterising the Sassanian stamp, then commonly used in Persia, a country which, by the bye, was the source of many of the ideas expressed in these figures and inscriptions. The choice Indian Sards, Nicoli, and Amethysts which embellished earlier periods, are replaced by coarser materials, the native productions of the countries which had engendered the new creed, the Jasper of Egypt dark green, or sometimes mottled with yellow and red, the Plasma, usually of bad quality, passing from a dirty olive-green into common Calcedony, and quite as abundantly the fibrous Hæmatite more or less magnetic. Indeed the opaque Jasper and the Loadstone, those special materials for signets at the fountains of the Magic Art, Egypt and Assyria, had, from time immemorial, engrossed the reputation of the most fitting vehicles for talismanic figures. The former was Pliny's *Molochites*, "opaque, and of the colour of a mallow leaf, of innate power as an amulet to protect children;" its black variety was his *Antipathes*, "recommended by the Magi as a sure defence against witchcraft of every kind;" whilst the Hæmatite is the Persian *Kamhahen*, perhaps the true etymology of *cameo*, a word that came into Europe in the ages when every engraved stone passed for a talisman.

So constant is this rule of unmitigated barbarism that Gnostic types when found well executed and in fine stones, as sometimes is the case, will on examination always prove to emanate from the Cinquecento school, a period when anything pertaining to Astrology or the Kabala was reproduced in vast abundance under the impulse of the revived spirit of mystic speculation. To this and the following century, must be referred the authorship of those large jaspers, not unfrequent in Collections, presenting the terminal figure of Osiris, the field occupied with astrological cyphers and *modern* Hebrew letters. Of these imitations, betraying themselves by their own excellence, the most conspicuous was a large Amethyst, obtained by me at Florence, engraved with an erect figure of the hawk-headed Phre, Priapean, holding the Cynophalus upon his hand, and standing on the coiled serpent, an intaglio in the

best Roman manner, that no era of Gnosticism had been capable of producing.*

Antique pastes with subjects do not exist, and for a very sufficient reason. The *material* of a talisman being quite as essential to its virtue as the *sigil* engraved upon it; the mystery whereof the profound Camillo di Leonardo shall hereafter declare in his own words. Again, the genuine stones were in themselves so cheap, and the work upon them produced so expeditiously and with so little care, as to leave small temptation for counterfeiting them in a baser substance. The only exception that has come under my notice to the inferior quality of the stones employed by the Gnostic engravers is the singular Garnet tablet of the Hertz Cabinet, of which a description will be given in its proper place, when we come to treat of inscriptions.

The *Lettering* of the legends† upon these talismans has a peculiarity of execution that of itself serves to identify almost every stone belonging to the Gnostic series. The letters are all formed by *straight* lines, the Θ, O, and Σ, being quite square, either from the rudeness of the instrument employed to cut them, or because want of skill prevented the engraver from attempting curvilinear characters, to do which neatly requires the utmost dexterity and long practice, being in fact the most difficult task that can be demanded from the *wheel*. For it was with this newly-invented instrument, as the equality of their lines demonstrates, that these ill-shaped characters were faintly

* I had long suspected that the Cinquecento period produced much Gnostic work in the ruder style, and at length have obtained proof demonstrative of the truth of this suspicion. Amongst a large lot of coarsely-cut Gnostic jaspers of very recent work, my attention was caught by one (an inscription of several lines) *cut* upon a tablet of that streaky agaet paste so popular at that period, but quite unknown to the ancients. The piece had been highly polished and then engraved with the wheel; the design probably copied from a genuine stone.

† Stiechel explains the inscription upon the shield borne by an Abraxas figure, written thus, XVX / IAXV as no more than the customary form in that position, the Name Iao with the Sign of the Cross thrice repeated (to make up the mystic number, Seven). He quotes in support of this acute explanation a gem published by Matter, bearing ΧΦΕΝΕCΧΗΡΦΙΧ, expressing the sound of the Hebrew *Peni zets ripia* = "His face—this—healed."

traced upon the stone. In all likelihood the same artists were the Alexandrian glass-workers, famed long before for their engraved vases, Martial's "tepide toreumata Nili," for Pliny uses the significant expression, "vitrum, aliud torno teritur, aliud argenti more caelatur," "some glass vessels are cut out by means of the drill, others carved in relief in the same manner as silver plate." The Ξ in these inscriptions is invariably formed by drawing a short line across the diagonal of a Z, so that in rude work, it cannot be distinguished from the latter character.

These inscriptions are often found *superadded* upon the backs of gems of much earlier date, evidently for the purpose of converting them into talismans. Of such conversions the most remarkable known to me are, a fine cameo (Marlborough Cabinet) a bust of Commodus; on the reverse of which has been rudely cut the Abraxas-god surrounded by a legend, unintelligible though sounding like Greek words.

ΔΟΥΓΕΝΝΑΙΟΔΕΜΕΝΑΙΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΚΟΣ

Another cameo (Royal Cabinet) with the helmeted heads regardant of Constantine's two elder sons, has received the very unorthodox addition of Anubis, also surrounded by a long legend in huge characters, so barbarous as to defy transcription. A third (Devonshire Parure, No. 79), a fine head of Hercules, lapis lazuli, has received the Gnostic baptism by the addition on the back of a scarabeus with expanded wings (recognised emblem of the Creator), and the word of power ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ. The extremely debased style of all such additions plainly indicates a period long posterior to that of the originals; whilst the position they occupy, necessarily concealed when in use, proves that the whole object of such *improvements* was the supernatural protection of the wearer.

The finest example of Gnostic conversion is an onyx cameo (Vienna Cabinet), representing some young Cæsar under the form of Jupiter Axur, standing in front face with the thunderbolt in his left hand, his right resting on the sceptre, the ægis hangs down his back for paludamentum, at his feet the eagle on one side a trophy with seated captive, hands tied behind; all in a good style in low relief. The talisman-maker has cut a

line of square characters, resembling Palmyrene, down each leg from hip to foot, a nimbus of the same round his head, others on the field: and, to make all sure, has covered the back of the gem with 16 lines in the same abstruse lettering. It is carefully figured in Arneth's 'Cameen des K. K. Cabinettes,' (Pl. xviii. 2), who suggests Julian for its subject, without considering that the "Philosopher" wore a long beard during the period when such a representation of him as *this* was permissible. Besides, for the two centuries before Julian's times, Serapis was the only type under which the reigning emperor was allowed to be complimented, the old Latin 'Jovis Axur' having grown obsolete. The hero of this apotheosis is much more probably Titus, or even his brother. The cameo is of respectable dimensions, being $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches high by $2\frac{1}{2}$ wide.

As regards the history of Glyptics these inscribed gems have a value of their own, as fixing the date when the *wheel* came generally into use in the engraver's *atelier*; for the minute and elegant lettering of earlier times will be found, when examined with the microscope, to have been *incised* in the gem with the diamond point, whence its perfect regularity and freedom.

Of these Gnostic inscriptions in general, Raspe (Catalogue of Tassie's Pastes, p. 38) has given accurate transcripts, from an immense collection belonging to every shape and period of Gnosticism. Chabouillet has more recently done the same for the very large series in the French Cabinet, in his valuable 'Catalogue des Camées de la Bib. Imp.' p. 282. In the 'Gorlæ Dactyliotheca,' (3rd ed. 1695), Nos. 326–486 are entirely Gnostic and astrological designs, and include the greater part of those first published by Chiflet in his 'Macarii Abraxas-Proteus,' ed. 1610, whose plates were re-engraved for the purpose on a reduced scale, but with large additions, apparently made by the learned editor of the work, Gronovius. But the most extensive series of actual representations of the whole class are the plates to the Section 'Les Abraxas' of Montfaucon's grand work 'L'Antiquité expliquée.' Many of his examples were drawn from the fine Cabinet of gems belonging to the Library of St. Geneviève, besides others, and very

interesting specimens, from a previous work by Capello.* Though roughly engraved, they seem to have been copied with laudable attention to accuracy.

* Who professes to copy originals in the ancient Cassel Cabinet; although many of his types are so unparalleled in modern collections that Matter suspects them mere creations of his own fancy. But examples of some of the strangest amongst them have lately come under my own notice, apparently mediæval Arabic talismans, which Capello, very pardonably, mistook for remains of the ancient Gnostics.

Fig. 12.

LEGENDS AND FORMULÆ.

Foremost in the rank of Words of Power stands the "Mystery of the Seven Vowels," so important as to demand a separate section for its discussion with befitting reverence. Though inferior to these, great no doubt was the virtue of those interminable strings of letters that fill both faces of many a Gnostic stone—later refinements upon the celebrated Ἐφέσια Γράμματα, as Clemens aptly remarks. Amongst these interminable formulæ lurk, no doubt, those potent spells composed by Solomon himself; by repeating which and at the same time applying to the sufferer's nose his ring (under whose gem was placed the herb prescribed by the same oracle of wisdom) the Jew Eleazar drew out through their nostrils the devils possessing many people, in the presence of Vespasian, his tribunes and chief officers. The sapient Josephus adds, that to make sure of the exit of the diabolical occupant, the exorcist commanded him to overturn in his flight a basin of water placed at a considerable distance, which was forthwith done, to the consternation and conviction of all the heathen spectators. The Ephesian Spell, the mystic words graven on the zone of the Great Diana, were commonly used by the Magi of Plutarch's times for the same purpose.

And there can be no doubt that such invocations were often efficacious. Demoniacal possession was nothing more than epilepsy (its very name, signifying *possession*, being derived from that same belief); for Galen, after rationally discussing the natural causes of the malady, remarks that the vulgar universally attributed it to the agency of devils. Now our experience of Mesmerism (so far as there is any reality in that pet science of charlatans) clearly shows what inexplicable effects can be produced upon persons labouring under nervous derangement by words of command authoritatively pronounced. How much greater the effect of those words in old times, when uttered in an unknown tongue by a person of imposing presence,

and over patients already filled with the belief of his power to relieve them! Hence the Casting-out of devils became the grand staple of their trade with all the Thaumaturgists, both old and new, of the ages with which we are dealing. That the cure should be permanent was a thing perfectly immaterial, it sufficed the exorcist's purpose if the manifestation of his power should be successful for the moment, to the edification of the awestruck crowd of believers, and to the confusion of the few *Rationalistic* doubters amongst the crowd.

Such spells gave power likewise over demons ranging about unconfined in fleshly prison. Eucrates, in Lucian's amusing 'Philopseudes,' boasts that he is so accustomed to meet thousands of them roving about, that he has come not to mind them at all, more especially since "The Arabian has given me a ring made out of the nail from a cross, and taught me the spell composed of many *Names*." The last remark is valuable for our purpose: it proves that the legends in an unknown tongue on our talismans are sometimes to be explained from the Arabic,* and also may consist of strings of titles of the one deity invoked. Virgil's—

> "Crines effusa sacerdos
> Ter centum tonat ore deos, Erebumque, Chaosque,
> Tergeminamque Hecaten, tria virginis ora Dianæ;"
> (Æn. iv. 510)—

distinctly refers to the same superstition, for Servius explains these "three hundred gods" in the spells of Dido's Massylian sorceress, as not meaning so many *different* deities, but only so many *epithets* of *Hecate* herself; whose very names he, for the same reason, fancifully derives from the numeral ἑκατον. The same idea yet survives in the religious exercise of the devout Moslem, the mental repetition and reflection upon the Ninety-and-nine Arabic epithets of the One Almighty.

* In fact, the "unknown characters" sometimes occurring in the field of these talismans are unmistakeably Himyaritic letters, belonging to that primitive alphabet of Arabia. Osiander and Levy have published gems bearing intagli, of good execution, of Persian deities (therefore long anterior to Gnostic times), and neatly engraved Himyaritic legends. This character is perfectly vertical, handsome, and well defined in its differences; it is a modification of the Palmyrene, and the parent of the modern Ethiopic.

The great object of these adjurations was to address the Deity by the names under which he was known to all the nations of Earth; in this way making sure of addressing him by the appellation wherein he most delighted. This is the fundamental principle of, and sufficient explanation of, the entire class of these talismanic legends; and of their syncretism No. 10 of the 'Magic Papyrus' affords a most valuable illustration. "I call upon thee that didst create the Earth, and bones, and all flesh, and all spirit, that didst establish the Sea, and that shakest the Heavens, that didst divide the Light from the Darkness; Thou, the Great, Directing Mind, that disposest all things, Eye of the world! Genius of genii (*δαίμων δαιμονίων*), God of gods, the Lord of spirits, ΙΑΩ ΟΥΗΙ, hearken unto my voice! I call upon Thee, the Master of the gods, O loud thundering Zeus, O sovereign Zeus, Adonai! Lord ΙΑΩ ΟΥΗΕ! I am he that calleth upon thee in the Syrian tongue, the great God *Ζααλαηρ Ιφ φου;* and do not thou disregard my voice in the Hebrew language, *Αβλαναθαναλβα Αβρασιλωα.* For I am *σιλθωχωουχ λαιλαμ βλασαλωθ* Ιαω Ιαω *νεβουθ σαβιοθαρ βωθ αρβαθ* Ιαω Ιαω*θ σαβαωθ παγουρη ραγουρη βαρουχ Αδωναι* Ελωαι *ιαβρααμ βαρβαρανω ναν σιφ.* O lofty-minded, ever-living Crown of the world; containing all, *Σιεπησακτι ετη βιου = σφη = νουοι = σιεθυ = χθεθωνηρυγχ* ΩΗΑΗΗΩΑΙ Α ΩΗΙΑΩ *ασιαλ σαα πηαλσω εθμουρησινι σεμ λαυ λου λουριγχ.* (This spell) looses fetters, causes blindness (i.e. makes one invisible), procures dreams, gives favour, for whatsoever purpose thou wishest."

One circumstance, very unaccountable, connected with these Inscriptions is wherefore the *Pehlevi* character, the national writing of the Magi in those times, should never be used in formulæ so often embodying the doctrines of that profession. Neither are any complete legends to be found written in *Punic*, although that character with the last mentioned was at the time universally employed, in various modifications, all over Asia and Africa. In the latter country Punic was not superseded by Latin until a very late period of the Empire, for in the second century Apuleius ('Apology') wishing to prove the neglect of his stepson's education by the boy's uncle who had taken charge of him (the family belonged to the large city Madaura in

Numidia), declares that though arrived at the age of sixteen he could speak nothing but Punic and the little Greek he had picked up from his mother, "praeter Punicè, et siquid adhuc a matre Græcissat." "And some years later, the emperor Severus, a descendant of Hannibal's, had to blush for his sister when she came from his native place Leptis to Court, "vix Latine loquens." It is true the characters which are often scattered over the field of these gems have much the look of Punic; others again of Palmyrene Syriac; whilst some are obviously the same with the strange Nubian characters to be seen in abundance graven on the rocks at Silsilis, upon the upper Nile. As for the square (modern) Hebrew, all works presenting them are mere fabrications of the astrologers and Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th centuries. *Hieroglyphical* writing, though naturally to be looked for in the manufacture of Alexandria, hardly occurs at all; it is probable that even its modification the Demotic had long before been superseded (in that capital at least) by the Greek alphabet. The only exception known to me is the agate published by Caylus ('Rec. d'Ant.' viii. pl. 8), presenting the common four-winged Priapic genius in the sacred boat, the reverse bearing a long vertical line of neatly cut genuine hieroglyphics. The Arabic "Kamar" *Moon*, sometimes found in these formulæ, illustrates Pliny's remark, that the Magi ordered the Name of the *Sun* or *Moon* to be engraved on emeralds or amethysts, in order to convert them into amulets against witchcraft, and giving success at Court. An emerald (Praun) of very bad quality, however, inscribed ΙΑΩ ΣΑΒΑΩΘ ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ, may represent the very kind of amulet alluded to. But that Alexandria was the grand *fabrique* of talismans is equally apparent to the mineralogist from the *materials*, as to the archæologist from the *lettering* employed in their construction. Nevertheless it still remains unexplained why the Magi should not have written their own spells in the character then solely current in the vast dominions of the Sassanian kings.

The *language* of these inscriptions is never Latin, rarely Greek, frequently Syriac, but most commonly corrupt Hebrew. For this choice the sufficient reason is given by Iamblichus in a

letter to Porphyrius, where he expressly states that, "The gods are well pleased with prayers addressed unto them in the *Egyptian* or *Assyrian* tongues, as being ancient and cognate languages to *their own*, and moreover those in which prayer was first made unto them; and therefore they have stamped as sacred the entire speech of those holy nations." It is a singular coincidence that Justinus Kerner, in his extraordinary work, 'Die Seherin von Prevorst' (in reading which one continually fluctuates between the conviction of its being an impudent fiction, and the uncomfortable suspicion that it may be a revelation of the profoundest truth), assigns a similar reason for the writing used by the visitant from the spirit-world so greatly resembling Arabic, "because *that* had the best claim to be considered the primitive language of mankind." This "Seer" was a peasant girl, worn out by long sickness to that degree as to belong more to the next world than to this. Consequently she had become sensible of the presence of spiritual visitors, and acted as a medium of communication between them and those in the flesh. Kerner, a physician, took her into his own house the better to observe these singular phenomena, and kept a regular diary of her health and of her disclosures during several months until her death, with a minuteness of which only a German is capable. He writes evidently in all good faith, and, amidst heaps of nonsense, puts down some startling occurrences beyond the flights of forgery and confirmed by one's own experience.

But as concerns the "Language of the other world," in every country "Omne ignotum pro magnifico" has ever been the maxim of priestcraft, the soundness of which has been demonstrated by the experience of all time. More particularly does this apply to forms of prayer. Thus Orpheus:

> "Then whilst the cauldron bubbles o'er the flame,
> Address each godhead by his mystic name;
> Full well th' immortals all are pleased to hear
> Their *mystic names* rise in the muttered prayer."

Of such mystic invocations it will be advisable to adduce examples from writers contemporary with their use, before proceeding to the consideration of actual remains of similar nature. Of the numerous specimens cited, the following are the

most noteworthy. The 'Pistis-Sophia' (§ 358) makes the Saviour "standing upon the shore of the sea, the ocean, call upon God with this prayer, saying, Hear me, O Father, thou Father of all fatherships, Infinite Light, Αεηιουω Ιαω Αωι ωια ψινωθερ θερινωψ νωψιθερ ζαγνουρη παγουρη μεθμομάωθ νεψιομαωθ μαραχαχθα θωβαρραβαθ θαρναχαχαν ροροκοθορα Ιεου Σαβαωθ." And again (§ 375) in this valuable description of the Gnostic Sacrament: "Then said Jesus, bring me fire and vine-branches. And they brought them unto him, and he, placing upon them an offering, set two vessels of wine, the one on the right, the other on the left of the offering. He set before them the offering: he put also a cup of water before the vessel of wine which was on the right hand, and he set a cup of wine before the vessel of wine that was on the left; and he set loaves of bread, according to the number of his disciples in the middle between the cups. He set likewise a cup of water behind the loaves. And Jesus, standing before the offering, made all the disciples to stand behind him, being all clothed in linen garments, having all of them in their *hands the number* of the Name* of the Father of the Treasury of Light. And he cried aloud, saying, Hear me, O Father, Father of all fatherships, Boundless Light, Ιαω Ιουω Ιαω αωι ωια ψινωθερ θερινωψ νωψιθερ νεφθομαραχθα ιηαναμεναμαν αμανηι of heaven! Ισραι αμην αμην σουβαι βαι αππαση αμην αμην δερρα αραι απαοι αμην αμην σασαρσαρτου αμην αμην κουκιαμην μαι αμην αμην ιαι ιαι τουαπ αμην αμην μαινμαρι μαριη μαρει αμην αμην αμην." Again Irenæus copies out a formula "couched in Hebrew words, to inspire greater awe into the Gallic neophyte (at Lugdunum)," as used by certain Gnostics there in administering baptism: βασσεμα χαμοσσε βα αιανομα ματαδια ρουαδα κουστα βαβαφορ κολαχθαι, "I invoke Thee, Supreme over every virtue, the Light of the Father by name, the Good Spirit, the Life, because thou hast reigned in the body." Another of their formulæ was—Μεσσια ου φαρεγ ναμεμψαιμεν χαλδαιαν μοσεμεδια ακφραναι ψαουα Ιησου Ναζαρια. "I do not separate the Spirit, the Head, and the Supercelestial

* Meaning, perhaps, having their fingers arranged so as to express this number; for Pliny mentions a very *old* statue of Janus displaying the fingers in such manner as to indicate his own *numeral*, that of the days in the year.

Virtue, the Merciful One. May I prosper in thy name, O Saviour of Truth."

But as regards the expression of divine mysteries by means of letters of the alphabet, Marcus stands pre-eminently first amongst the Gnostics, as the following extracts from his "Revelation" will conclusively attest. "The supreme Tetrad came down unto me from that region which cannot be seen nor named, in a female form because the world would have been unable to bear their appearing in a male figure, and revealed to me the generation of the universe, untold before either to gods or men. When first the Father, the Inconceivable, Beingless,* sexless, began to be in labour he desired that his Ineffable should be born, and his invisible should be clothed with form. He therefore opened his mouth and uttered the Word like unto himself. This word standing before him showed that he was manifesting himself as the form or type of the Invisible One. Now the uttering of the Name came to pass in this wise. He (the Supreme) spake the first word of his name, the which is a syllable of *four* letters. He then added the second syllable, also of *four* letters. Then the third, composed of *ten* letters. Finally the fourth, made up of twelve letters. Thus the utterance of the whole name consists of *thirty letters*, and of *four syllables*. Each letter has a form-pronunciation and writing of its own, but neither understands nor beholds that of the whole Name; nay, not even the power of the letter standing next to itself. Now these sounds united make up the Beingless unbegotten Æon, and *these* are the *Angels* that always behold the face of the Father. Thus the Father knowing himself to be incomprehensible gives unto each of the letters, called Æons, its own proper sound, inas-

* The Kabbalistic "En-Soph." In this *boundlessness*, or as the En-Soph, God cannot be *comprehended* by the intellect, nor described by words, for there is nothing that can grasp or define Him to us; and as such He is a certain sense *non-existent*, in because as far as our minds are concerned that which is perfectly incomprehensible does not exist. To make this existence perceptible, and to render himself comprehensible, the En-Soph had to become active and creative. But the En-Soph cannot be the direct Creator, for he has neither will, intention, desire, thought, language, nor action, as these properly imply *limit*, and belong to finite beings, whereas the En-Soph is Boundless."

much as none of them singly is competent to utter the entire Name."*

The substance of the revelation brought down to Marcus by Truth is to be found in the Kabbala, which makes the mystic names of God to consist of four, twelve, forty-two and seventy-two letters respectively. The Kabbalists go so far as to assert that the forty-two victims offered by Balaam in order to obtain a favourable response, were consecrated to one of these great names. If indeed Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, the magic virtues of numerals would have formed an essential part of his learning, as we see from the doctrine of Pythagoras, confessedly derived from Egypt. It looks very much like as if the framers of the genealogy of Jesus had the same object in view, when they forced the generations to the required number by omitting *three* of the kings in the second division, being able to deal with the *third* in whatever manner they pleased. On counting the number of the vowels that evidently have some deep purpose in occurring without consonants on so many talismans of the age of Marcus, we should, I expect, often find it tally with that of one or the other of these Holy Names.†

A subsequent revelation of the same Tetrad to Marcus, serves to account for the frequent appearance of the naked woman, the Venus Anadyomene of earlier times, upon Gnostic monuments. "After having declared these things, the Tetrad added: I will shew unto thee *Truth*, whom I have brought

* This is a regular Talmudic notion as the Rabbins propound. "At first the Name of *twelve letters* was communicated to every one; but when the profane multiplied it was only communicated to the most pious of the priests, and these pre-eminently pious priests absorbed it from their fellow-priests in the chant. It is recorded that Rabbi Tarphon said: I once went up the orchestra in the Temple after my maternal uncle, and bending forward my ear to a priest I heard how he absorbed it from his fellow-priests in the chant. R. Jehudah said in the time of Rab the divine name of *forty-two letters* is only communicated to such as are pious, not easily provoked, not given to drinking, and are not self-opinionated. He who knows that name and preserves it in purity, is beloved above, cherished below, respected by every creature, and is new to both worlds."—(Babylon. Mid. 71 a.).

† This explains the Σενγα βαρφαρανγες, "those who stand before the Mount" so commonly following angelic names upon our talismans; where also the long strings of letters may be designed to express their Æon unbegotten.

down from the celestial mansions that thou shouldest behold her naked, acknowledge her beauty, hear her speaking, and be astonished at her wisdom. Look up therefore at her head A and Ω, at her neck B and Ψ, at her shoulders with her hands Γ and X, at her breasts Δ and P, at her chest E and Υ, at her back Z and T, at her belly H and Σ, at her thighs Θ and P, at her knees I and Π, at her legs K and O, at her ankles Λ and Ξ at her feet M and N. This is the body of Truth, this the form of the letters, this the character of the writing. Whereupon Truth looked upon me (Marcus) and opened her mouth, and uttered a word, and that word became a Name, a name which we know and speak—Christ Jesus: and having named him she held her peace."*

This "figure of Truth" is made up, it will be perceived, by taking successive *pairs* of letters from each extremity of the alphabet; perhaps, thereby constituting them male and female, and thus making them types of so many Æons. All this suggests a rational question, whether the primary application of the name "Logos" to the Divine Emanation, was not at first a mere interpretation of the Rabbinical Synonym "Name, or Word," the respectful substitute for the ineffable Name Jehovah, the *Shem Hak Kodesh*; and that later, the secondary meaning of *Logos*, "Reason" suggested to the Platonising Jews of Alexandria its analogy to their own Sophia-Achamoth, the first-born of the Supreme Cause. And finally, the composition of this Holy Name, extending to *thirty* letters, illustrates the purport of that interminable polysyllabic title which runs either in one unbroken circle, or sometimes in the outline of an erect serpent, around the margin of so many Gnostic gems, and circumscribes the mystic device engraved in the centre. In the latter arrangement of the inscription, one is tempted to recognise that "Good and Perfect Serpent" of the

* Similarly in the Kabbalistic diagram of the Sephiroth, the *Crown* is the head; Wisdom, the brain; Intelligence, the heart; Love, the right arm; Gentleness, the left arm; Beauty, the chest; Firmness, the right leg; Splendour, the left leg; Foundation, the genitals; Kingdom, or Shekinah, the union of the whole body. The Venus Anadyomene so often seen on our talismans was probably adopted by the Gnostics in this spiritualised sense; and thereby still continues to personify the virtue, *Truth*.

Naaseni—that Messias whose visible type in the heavens their eyes, sharpened by faith, discovered and adored in the Constellation *Draco*.

To come now to the actual remains of Gnostic manufacture, which preserve to us formulæ of the nature just considered, the most important, to judge from its frequent occurrence, and the evident care bestowed upon its engraving, is the one here transcribed. My copy is taken from an example formerly in the State collection, probaby the finest talisman known. It is a thick plaque, somewhat heart-shaped, of dark garnet, $2\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in its greatest dimensions, bearing on the one side 14 lines, on the other 11, neatly cut in the Greek character in the third century but making no distinction between the A and the Λ.

Obverse.

ΑΤΩϹΛϹΛΩΛΛΩΝΕ
ϹΕΜΕϹΕΙΛΛΜΛΒΡΛϹΛΖ
ϹƷΖΥΡΡΛΤΗΛΚΡΛΜΜΛ
ΚΡΛΜΜΛΚΛΝΛΡΙϹϹϹΕ
ΓΓΕΝΒΛΛΦΛΡΛΝΓΗϹ
ΛϹΝΙΛΜΒΩΝΛΡΟΥ
ΛΝΤΛΜΙΥΠΗΛΝ
ΜΟΡΛΡΛΧϹΙΔ
ΛΛΕΕΤϹΜΛΙ ✲

Reverse.

ΟΙΓΙϹΩΡΟΥΑΡ
ΙΛΩΡΕΩΗΛΦΟΝ
ΑΙΩΛΙΗΤΟϹ
ΩΛΙΗΜΛΟΗΛΩ
ΕΩΛΕΥΩΕΥΗ
ΩΛΙΕΥΕΙΗΙΕ
ΛΗΕΕΕΥΩ
ΗΛΩΛΕΥΕΩ
ΓΗΕΕΩΛΕΕ
ΩΗΛΩΗΝΗΦΙ
ΗΛΩΥΗΝΕΨ
ΕΜΗΛΙΛΟΛ
ΑΗΩΩΩ
ΕΩΩ

Amongst the titles on the obverse several familiar names may be detected, such as *Alon*, *Shemesh Eilam*, *Abrasax*. The long style filling the fourth line is clearly the correct spelling of the abbreviated *Agrammaeamereg* addressed in another part of the "Prayers of the Saviour," as the first of the "Invisible Gods." The next line *Shemgensalpharanges*, "they who stand before the mount of Paradise," can be no other than the Æons just described by Marcus as the "Angels who always behold the Father's face": whilst in this Jewish hierarchy of heaven the old god of Egypt, Anubis, oddly intrudes himself under his Coptic title of *Ambo*.

* Probably meant ἀλεζετέ με "Defend me!"—of exactly similar sound in the spoken language.

Both inscriptions agree literally with those upon the large oval calcedony figured by Chiflet (fig. 69) except the addition in the letter of a few words inclosed within a coiled serpent placed at the top of the obverse. Out of these inscriptions his friend Wendelin, by taking the language as good Greek, had contrived to elicit a most orthodox invocation to the Trinity, which however was evidently far from satisfactory to the sceptical and more sagacious Canon. Amongst the Townley gems is a large sard, agreeing in all except a few letters with Chiflet's specimen—convincing attestation to the supposed virtue of the formula. For the purpose of comparison I insert another, lately discovered, engraved on a much more minute scale than any of the preceding (Whelan's copy).

ZZZ
TRYE
✲ ✲
AΓΩEACAΩAAΩNC
COMECEIAAMABPAC
CƷZYPPAHAKPAMMA
KPAMMAKAMAPICCCE
ΓΓONBAAΔABANΓHC
IMECCIAAMΩBHAM
...ENIAMBΩNAPOY
...NTAMIXAHAA
....MOPAXEIΔY
...PABETEMAI
...ANΩ

OMECΩTOYAP
IAΩPEOHΛΦON
AEOAIHTOC
ΩAIMAΩHAO
IΩAOYΩOVH
ΩAIYHAHIC
AHEEEIYΩY
HAΩAEYCΩL
THECΩIACC
ΩHAΩHNIIVI
HAΩYHAAEY
CMHAIAOAY
...IHHΩΩΩYH
.....IΩΩHH

Dark red agate, 1 × $\frac{7}{9}$ in.: sent me by Mr. Whelan, Nov. 25, 1881.

Doubtless such immense and overcharged pieces of mystery served in their time the purpose of pocket prayer books, out of which the owner recited the due invocations at the sacred rites. To some such *manual* of devotion, the pseudo-Orpheus possibly alludes by

> "Pray, with the flowered *Petraces* in thy hand,
> When hecatombs before the altar stand."

The Orientalist desirous of exercising his ingenuity upon the decyphering of these, for the most part unexplained monuments will find an immense collection of them in Raspe (Nos. 433–633) copied with scrupulous accuracy. The reason he there gives for the attention he has paid to a class previously so

neglected is a very sound one. "All these sects have evidently borrowed their *symbols*, and probably also their respective explanations, from the iconology and mysteries of the Egyptians and other nations of the East. If as regards the meaning of hieroglyphics and symbols they had no better information, the Gnostics of Egypt and Syria had at least national tradition to depend upon—a point assuredly of some weight. If therefore the more recent sects of Gnostics with their symbolical learning have established new opinions and fresh modifications of religion upon the basis of the old, we are not therefore to conclude that they knew nothing about, and wantonly gave a new meaning to, the symbols which they thus misapplied. This is the only rational point of view in which these amulets and engravings ought to be studied."

Raspe's collection I shall now proceed to supplement by copies of several unpublished examples—the most interesting that have come under my notice in a long course of study, and such as serve best to illustrate the theories proposed in the foregoing pages. And to show the curious and puzzling nature of the whole class, they often present the critical examiner with signs and *siglæ*, now supposed the exclusive property of national religions, the most diverse from one another, as they were remote from the recognised metropolis of Gnosticism. Intermingled with the regular Greek characters appear strange signs analogous in form, often identical with, the Caste-marks of the Hindoos, and which in their turn became the parents of those used by the mediæval alchemists and Rosicrucians, and (during the same ages) of the true professors of Masonry. The consideration of these *Sigla*, of which I have collected a large series belonging to all ages and countries, has proved sufficiently fruitful to supply materials for a separate and important subdivision of this Treatise. One example, described under "talismans and amulets," presents unmistakeable evidence of the use of *Runes* in the Alexandrine studio, whilst another, shortly to be noticed, demonstrates that the Gnosis may dispute with Hibernia her supposed peculiar invention of the mysterious *Oghams*.

A tablet of aquamarine (?) communicated to me by the

Rev. Greville Chester, bears the inscriptions in well-formed characters—

Obverse.

. . . ΙΕΡΚΡ . . . .
. . ΒΔΩΡΓΟΛΕΟΡΟ
. . ΑΛΧΑΜΧΑΒΡΑϹ . .
. . ΗΤΑΔΩΝΑΙϹΑ . .
. . ΑΩΘΑΓΙΑΔΥΝΑ.
. ΜΙϹΒΟΗΘΕΙΜ.

Reverse.

ϹΑΒΑΩΘΩΥΕΑΗΩ
ΡΜΑΡϹΑΒΑΟΥΦΕΙ
ΟΡΘΟΘΑΥΜΑΘΙΜ
ΥΧΡΩϹΕΜΕΝΟΧ
ΑΠΕΡΚΡΗΦΤΑΩ

Extremity.

ΘΑΩΘΟΥ.

A string of titles ending with "Lord of hosts! defend me."

ΙΛΕΩΒΛΦΡΕ
ΝΕΜΟΝΟΘΙΛΑΡ
ΙΚΡΙΦΙΕΥΕΛΛΙΦΙΡΚ
ΙΡΑΛΙΝΥΟΜΕΝΕΡΦΑ
ΒΩΕΑΙΑΝΑΕΙΑΥΕΕΑ
ΩΕΙΩΙΑΙΑΙΑΝΙΝ
ΝΙΞΛΖΚΙΦΥΛΑ
ΖΟΝ

Sapphirine calcedony, the size of a pigeon's egg.—(Forman Collection.)

The concluding word *φύλαξον*, "Do thou protect," clearly evinces that this elegantly engraved invocation was addressed to some *one* deity rejoicing in many titles, and styled "propitious" by its opening *ἱλέω*.

ΜΙΕΙΧΑΗΛ
ΓΑΒΡΙΗΑΔΑΦ
ΑΗΛΕΕΕΕΝΓΕ
ΝΒΑΡΑΝΓΗ
ΝΙΑW

A very thick stone of sapphirine calcedony. This is purely Jewish, perhaps the ware of some "Magna sacerdos arboris" sold to the Roman ladies, for it puts the buyer under the

protection of the Archangels "Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, who stand before the Mount of Paradise of Jehovah."

A remarkable exemplification of the mixture of two opposing creeds is found in the ΟΡΩΡΙΟΥΘ, "Light of lights," accompanying the figure of a globose vase with bands hanging from the neck. This is evidently "the small golden vessel shaped like a cow's udder, containing the libations of milk" mentioned by Apuleius as carried in the Isiac procession by the same official who bore aloft the Hand of Justice. The *gridiron*-like object often laid upon it, is the regular Egyptian door-key, made of wood. In one example figured by Matter (Pl. vi. 6), the key is shown of the regular *Roman* form in the same position, which places the meaning of the more usual figure entirely out of doubt. This shows the reason for κλειδοῦχος, "the keybearer," being a priestly title.

Other types purely Egyptian, offer some curious improvements upon the old "qualia demens Ægyptus portenta colat." For example, one (Praun) exhibits Anubis, but now equipped, with two heads and four hands holding torches and daggers; styled on the reverse ΓΙΕΡΑ–ΑΜΒΟ–ΥΒΑΚΑ–ΚΞΙΚ–ΥΚ. In another (Nelthropp) the Cat-headed goddess, Taf-Neith stands lotus-crowned, and is addressed as ΚΥΧΒΑ–ΚΥΧΒΑ*–ΚΑΧΥΑ–ΒΑΖΑΚΑΧ–ΚΧ. Again Anubis with the superadded heads of Pan (*Mendes*) and a cock (*Phre*), with arms outstretched in the form of a cross; his body supported upon the legs of an ibis, has over the heads respectively written the initials Θ, Π, Χ. On the reverse ΛΙΗΒ–ΩΠΟΧ–ΟΥΝΟ–ΧΡΑ. But the most curious composition of this nature known to me is presented by a large elliptical mottled jasper, measuring $1\frac{1}{8}+\frac{3}{4}$ inch, very boldly cut, and better drawn than usual—apparently a Solar talisman (Mr. Topham, Rome). The obverse shows a *gryllas* in the outline of a cock having the head of Pan, scorpions for tail-feathers, and the whip of Sol stuck in his rump to complete that appendage, standing upon a serpent—overhead are the sun-star and crescent, on his back rests a tailed globe (a comet?) in front Α, in the field below the astral *siglæ*. On the reverse, ΟΓ (73?) over

* *Chaldee*, "The Star, the Star."

the Agathodæmon serpent uncoiled, and crawling, a star and A. Below the serpent, ΕΔΩΓ ΗΙΗΩ, the letters inverted, then another line ΗΙVOMCOI. Below this again the triple S on the bar that always accompanies the Agathodæmon, ΙΑΗΙΕΩ–ΙΕΟVΩΗ, reading thus in the impression. In the last word "the Great Ιεου"—special title of the Supreme Being in the Pistis-Sophia may easily be detected; whilst the triple-headed deity previously described, very probably expresses the conception of those mighty Τριδυνάμεις θεοὶ, who play so important a part in the theology of the same book of wonder.

The following examples are the more genuine offspring of the Kabbala, consisting of letters alone, uncontaminated by the presence of the idols of Misraim. First for beauty of material and engraving stands a large *citrine* (occidental topaz) formerly in the Praun cabinet, now in the Gnostic Series, British Museum.

On one side is an oval enclosing ΗΙ (perhaps denoting the Ogdoad and Decad, the base of Marcus' scheme; *see* Hep. vi. 52); an eye, emblem of Osiris, a square bisected, and Δ, which last letter may also numerically represent the Tetrad of the same Doctor.

The other face of the gem presents,

ΑΜΑΡΥCΜΗΡΙΑΕΜΙΟΥΩ
ΡΟΔΑCΝΑΒΑΡΕΕΗΙΟΥΩ
ΝΑΒΑΡΝΕΗΙΟΥΩ
ΕΡΕΘΡΑΥΜΟΥΩ
ΖΑΓΕCΟΨΙΟΥΩ
ΟΡΘΡΟΧΟΡCΕΥΩ
ΑΧΑΗΜΑΡΕΩ

The next is a legend which, with trivial variations, frequently occurs. Caylus (VI. Pl. 11) gives it very rudely added, upon the reverse of a female portrait. The present copy is from a large calcedony, somewhat coarsely executed, having on its other face the triple S and bar (Praun)—

CΤΟΧΒΑΘΑ
ΗΜΑΛΑΧΙCΘΟΜ
ΜΑΚΟΧΨΟΧ
ΑΒΡΑΜΜΑΩΘΗ
ΑΒΡΑΜΜΗΛ

The Hebrew Patriarch figures in this legend, and in many more of the same kind, as the divinely inspired founder of a

Gnosis, a reputation he enjoyed even amongst the heathen, who put him in the same category with Orpheus, first institutor of Mysteries. "Sev. Alexander in larario suo—omnes sanctiores in quibus Apollonium, et (quantum scriptor horum temporum dicit) Christum, *Abraham*, et Orpheum, et ejusmodi cæteros habebat." (Lampridius 29.)

To the same family belongs a yellow jasper (Maskelyne) displaying a *perforated* quatrefoil over the name ΙΑΩ, then the mystic vowels ΑΕΙΗΟΥΩΑΙ, then ΓΑΒΑΩΘ (*sic*) and on reverse ✲ΜΙΧΑΗΛ✲. The quatrefoil is originally the symbol of Sitala, the Tenth Trithakoor, or deified Jaina saint; whence it found its way along with the other Buddhistic machinery, into Mediæval symbolism, in which it resembles an *angel*.*

Very remarkable on account of its adjuncts, is a green jasper (Praun) bearing a long neatly-cut legend, the central portion of which is circumscribed by two lines, cut by short strokes at different angles, exactly after the fashion of the Irish Oghams. In the latter, as is well known, all the letters of the Roman alphabet are represented by the different positions of very short lines in relation to one continuous line in the middle; and it is impossible to imagine any other purpose subserved by the similar contrivance on our talisman. The Ogham is *supposed* to be an invention of the first missionaries to Ireland, it was used as late as the Civil War by Lord Glamorgan in his correspondence with Charles I. It is, however, very possible that the monks carried this simple stenography from Rome to their Celtic mission.†

ΠΥΡΟCΟΧ
ΚΡΗΦΟ
ΥΜΑΡΤΑ
ΑΡΦΟΥ
ΥΘΕΡ
ΦΟΥΘΑΙ

ΧΟΥΒΥ...
ΛΑΙΛΑΜ
ΘΑΛΘΑΛ
ΨΥΘΑΘΟ
ΡΟCΙΩ
ΙΩ
ΛΥΕΠΙΘΙΛΑΚΥΘΩ
CΥΠΙΝΕΙΨΙΑ

ΑΝΟΧ
ΜΟΥΙ
ΥΑΛΑΛ

* One of the heaviest charges against the mediæval Manichæans was the adoration of an *Octagon*, as the figure of God.

† The talisman-makers loved to press into their service all the strange characters that came to their knowledge. Even the Runic of the farthest north added its virtue to the Praun hepatic amulet to be fully noticed in its proper section.

A minute figure of Abraxas, green jasper (Praun) takes a new title "Abrachars" in the invocation ΑΒΡΑΧΑΡϹ–ΑΓΡΑϢΑ–ϢΑΡΙϢΝΙΕ.

Thoth's caduceus within a wreath, is accompanied by the legend on the reverse ΑΚΡΙϢΦΙ' on a brown calcedony in my collection.

Of all Agathodæmon talismans, no more elegant specimen has come to my knowledge than a large emerald-like plasma (Bosanquet) displaying the serpent "the Good and Perfect One" erect above his invariable concomitant sigla, and whom the reverse propitiates by the beautifully cut address ΟϹΟΡ–ΜΕΡΦ–ΦΕΡΓΑΜΑΡΑ–ΦΡΙΔΥΡΙϹ–ΧΝΟΥΦΙϹ–ΝΑΒΙϹ–ΚΙϹΝΥΘ True green jade, very convex on back (Rev. S. S. Lewis.) In the field, each side of serpent ΙϢΙ$\frac{\text{MN}}{\text{V}}$. – ΙΘΙ. "With me, with me!" in pure Chaldee. Reverse in two lines, round the usual symbol.

ΧΝΟΥΜΙϹΝΑΑΒΕΙϹΒΕΙΝΥΘΕΕΕ
ϹΟΡΟΟΡΜΕΡΦΕΡΓΑΓΒΑΡΜΑΦΡΙΠΥΙΡΙΡΙΓΞ

All cut with unusual precision and neatness of work. The legend has many words in common with Mr. Bosanquet's plasma.

Jerome's "Pater Bromius" of the Mithraic Cave has probably some share in the title "Sabbaoth," so often coupled with "Adonai," for Bacchus rejoiced in the epithet "Sabazius," derived from the shout "Sabbaoi" raised by the celebrants of his Orgies—a word identical with the Hebrew "Sabi" *glory!* Certain sectaries of our own day who bellow out the same word at their "Revivals," are little aware what an ancient and congenial authority they have for their vociferation.

"Adonai," *our Lord*, is converted by the Greek into Adoneus, a synonym for Pluto, and Orpheus, as already quoted, points out the identity of Bacchus, Pluto, and Sol. This is the foundation for the ancient exposition of the Syrian rite, the Mourning for Adonis ("The women weeping for Thammuz") as really applying to the sun's loss of power at the winter quarter. *Adoneus* or *Aïdoneus*, becoming interpreted according to Greek etymology, was supposed to signify him "that walketh unseen," whence spring the "helmet of Adoneus," that rendered the

wearer invisible; and Catullus's application of the title to the intrigue-loving Cæsar.

> "Perambulabit omnium cubilia
> Ut albulas columbas aut *Adoneus*."

The same Adonis had the name "Sal-Anbo" (which often occurs in Gnostic legends) as appears from the statement in Lampridius, "that Heliogabalus exhibited *Salanbo* with all the lamentation and tossing of head proper to the *Syrian* ceremony," —whereby he gave the omen of his own impending fate.

The Delphic E has already been noticed—but its importance demands further particulars of its history, which have been preserved by Plutarch in his curious treatise upon the subject. The Greeks with their usual fondness for explaining all mysteries *rationistically*, considered the letter as the simple numeral, *Five*, set up in the Temple to denote the original and proper number of the far-famed "Wise Men;" but which in later times had been raised to *seven*, by the addition of two more who had small claims to the honour. The legend went that these Five Wise Men, to commemorate the accidental meeting of them all in Delphi at the same festival, had dedicated the numeral carved in wood, which, decaying through age, the Corinthians replaced by a facsimile in bronze; which last was finally transmuted by Livia Augusta into another of *gold*, as more consistent with the dignity of the god of the place, whose son her husband claimed to be, and whose received image he represented in his features.

Others, more profoundly, interpreted the letter as representing by its proper sound in the Greek alphabet the declaration Εἶ, "Thou art" as addressed to the Godhead—thus making it equivalent to the title ὁ ὢν, "the living God," so frequently given to Jehovah.

But it is much more consistent with the simplicity of antique times, to understand the figure as merely standing for the number *Five*, a number sacred for *itself*, not for its reference to the fabled sages of a later period. The idea of its virtue may have come from an Indian source, where it is the cause of the five-headed shape assigned to Brahma. From India it would find its way to

Delphi in company with the Gorgon-heads, themselves masks of Bhavana the Destroyer, which guarded the actual oracle—a singular connexion, noticed by Euripides in his 'Ion.' But it should be remembered that the Hyperboreans, reputed founders of the Oracle, were placed between the Caspian and the frontiers of India. The *Omphalos* itself "shaded with garlands, and encompassed with Gorgons" was no other than the Brahminical *Lingam*, as its figure demonstrates, whether as repictured in the early vase paintings when embraced by Orestes seeking sanctuary there from the pursuing Eumenides, or with Apollo seated thereon, stamped on the money of the Seleucidae—direct descendants of the god. In form reduced to an obtuse cone, the emblem had nothing obscene in appearance, its hidden meaning being a matter of revelation to the initiated few. The same conically-shaped stone was the sole representative of Venus in her most ancient temples—Paphos for example. Again that earliest of all statues of Apollo, the Amyclæan, described by Pausanias, was a veritable Hindoo *Lat*—a bronze column 50 cubits high, to which later art had added a head, hands holding bow and spear, and *toes* (ἄκροι πόδες). But his throne, in the middle of which the idol *stood* erect, was an after-thought of the best times of Greece, covered with elaborate figures and reliefs, the work of Bathyeles, or of Myron, with his scholars.

And in truth this very lunar-shaped ϵ seems to belong to the same class of Indian importations, and to have been originally a mere Caste-mark—indeed, if placed horizontally ω, it becomes at once the badge of the sectaries of Vishnu. What strongly confirms this explanation is the fact, that this symbol had been consecrated at Delphi many centuries before that shape of the *letter* came into the Greek alphabet—a change only dating from the age of Antony and Cleopatra, upon whose medals, struck in Asia Minor, the lunar-shaped ϵ is first observable.

In the earliest dawn of Grecian philosophy we find Pythagoras* building his whole system upon the mystic properties of

* Who is constantly affirmed to have visited India, Apuleius stating of him, "Sed nec his artibus animi expletum mox Chaldæas, inde Brachmanas, eorum ergo Brachmanum Gymnosophistas adiisse."—('Florida.')

Numbers, and declared by tradition to have been taught the science in Egypt; nay more, Plato himself has penned in his Republic a certain section in the same line, worthy of any Alexandrian Kabbalist. In our own day, with the Sikhs to hold a "Punch," or council of Five, was the formal mode of deliberating upon all matters of State. And inasmuch as the most serious things have a ludicrous side, this sacred Numeral only preserves its reputation amongst ourselves from having given the name to the well-known beverage, by reason of the *five* ingredients that go to its concoction—perhaps too, because its brewing was the inevitable result of the coming together of the same number of Englishmen in the times when our language was enriched by so many loans from the Hindostanee.*

A remarkable feature in the theogony of Valentinus is curiously illustrated by a Praun Calcedony, elegantly engraved, and mounted in a gold frame by some later Oriental owner, who justly deemed the gem a talisman of uncommon power. "The Father at last sent forth a mighty Æon, called the *Cross*, and who contained within himself all the other thirty Æons. The same was likewise denominated *Terminus*, inasmuch as he served for *Boundary* between the Fulness (*Pleroma*) and the Deficiency (*Hysteroma*)." Our gem presents the Egyptian Tau, as a Deus Terminus, topped with a human head, and surrounded by a continuous legend composed of vowels interspersed with rare consonants; probably expressing the thirty Æons contained within the sigil's self. On the base of the Terminus is the legend ΝΙΧΑΡΟΠΛΗϹ, often occurring on talismans. The same words are found at the foot of a cruciform trophy, above which is the Christian Χ upon a stone in the French Cabinet (No. 2222) also followed by ΙΩΑ upon the back of a gem (*silex*) published in the 'Göttingische Anzeiger,' Nos. 35 *a*, *b*, which clearly emanates from Mithraic notions, for it represents the usual lion-headed, serpent-girt man, a torch in one hand, in the other a sword, serpent, and crown of victory, soaring aloft from the back of a lion, under which lies a prostrate corpse.

* For example *caste* and *dam*. The latter is the probable source of the common English expression that emphasises the small value of a thing, which ignorance softens into *curse*. Similarly used is *rap*, the smallest of the Swiss money.

A very curious instance of the employment of Gnostic figures in the art of Medicine is offered by the stone which Matter has published (Pl. II., C. 4). The obverse displays the Agathodæmon serpent placed between Phre (Sol) and a female in the act of adoration. Overhead are the mystic Vowels; below the undershaped vase, already noticed, placed upon a low altar, the whole encompassed by a legend in some unknown tongue. But the other side explains in lucid Greek the object of the composition. ΤΑϹϹΟΝ ΤΗΝ ΜΗΤΡΑΝ ΤΗϹ ΔΕΙΝΑ ΕΙϹ ΤΟΝ ΙΔΙΟΝ ΤΟΠΟΝΟΤΟΝ ΚΥΚΛΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΗΛΙΟΥ, "Place the womb of such or such a one into its proper region, O, the circle of the sun." Matter, in his explanation, has fallen into a ludicrous mistake, by interpreting *μητρὰν* as *μητέρα* he converts the words into a prayer for the soul of the mother of a certain Dina! But the real translation shows that the gem was made for *any* purchaser, to be worn as a preservative against the "prolapsus uteri," a female complaint very common in ancient times, owing to the abuse of the hot bath, so relaxing to the internal muscles, and also to the general employment of "abortiva," whenever thought desirable. In fact the very definite expression of the object, ΜΗΡΙΚΟΝ, *uterine*, is found on other gems, and places the correctness of the attribution of the former one quite out of doubt.

The "circle of the sun" means the *navel*, which marks the natural position of the organ concerned, for the navel in the microcosm was supposed to concide with the sun in the universe. This idea produced the far-famed hallucination of the Byzantine anchorites, respecting the mystical Light of Tabor, which shone upon the devotee in virtue of long-continued fasting, and unintermitted fixing of the eyes upon the region of the navel, whence at length it streamed forth, as from a focus, the "true creation of an empty brain and an empty stomach."*

* A neatly engraved ring-stone, hæmatite, lately communicated to me, has a line of several of the common *siglae*, followed by two more containing ΙΑϢ ΑΡΙΗΛ ΒΙΚΤΟΡΙΝΑ, "Jehovah, Lion of God (protect) Victorina!" When proper names can be deciphered on these talismans they are always those of women. A Praun gem, similarly opening with a line of *siglae* and the names Iao and Gabriel, was made for a certain Sabinia Quinta.

Another circumstance bearing upon this employment of the sigil is that Isis, the peculiar goddess of maternity, is often figured in Roman sculpture, holding up in her hand a conical object, pouch shaped, exhibiting a triangular orifice. This object some have taken for the Persia plum; much more probably does it represent the organ in question, the most natural and expressive symbol of that divinity's peculiar function. In her mystic coffer were carried the distinctive marks of both sexes, the *lingam* and *yoni* of the Hindoos. Their Isis, Parvati, who in this character takes the name of *Deva* "the goddess" pre-eminently, bears in her hand for distinctive badge the yoni, or bhaga, often a precious stone carved into that shape. Similarly her consort, Siva, carries the lingan or phallus. For example, the Nizam's diamond, the largest stone of its kind known *certainly* to exist, exhibits evident traces of the native lapidary's clumsy endeavours to reduce the native crystal to the proper shape for the hand of the great goddess. Ugly omen to happen under a female reign, this diamond was accidentally broken in two just before the outbreak of the Sepoy revolt.

Deva's Mark, as borne upon their foreheads by Parvati's sectaries, is formed by three strokes, the two outside white or yellow, the centre always red. It is interpreted as representing the womb, *methra*, of Bhavani (another of Parvati's names) out of which proceeded all that exists. The close relationship between the Egyptian and Hindoo goddesses cannot fail to strike the observer; Isis carries the very same attributes with Parvati—the kid and cobras—upon the talisman—published by Caylus (IV., Pl. 16). But the Egyptian goddess, having but one pair of hands, is forced to clasp in each the several attributes borne singly by her many-handed Indian prototype.

A singular union of two contrary deities in one body, is presented by a hematite (Praun), representing Anubis, who, besides his proper jackal's head, is equipped with another, maned on the neck, and unmistakably that of an ass; as Typhon,* the evil one, was depicted; moreover, one of the feet,

* The ass was sacred to Typhon. Plutarch (De Iside, 31) quotes an Egyptian legend that this deity fled from the "Battle of the Gods" upon

too, of the figure is clearly *hoofed*, so as to leave no doubt as to the ownership of the second head. The same discordance of characters is still further set forth by what he bears in his hands, the two of Anubis holding up *torches*, the two of the malignant Typhon, *swords*. This odd combination probably expressed the same idea as did the Anubis seen by Apuleius, who exhibited at one time a face black as the night, at another golden as the day, in order to express his functions exercised both in heaven and in hell. The reverse bears an inscription containing the Coptic name of the god, ΠΕΡΑ–ΑΜΒΩ–ΥΒΑΙΑ–ΚΞΙΚ–Λ.

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the back of an ass for over seven days' space without stopping, until he came into Judæa, where he begat two sons, Hierosolymus and Palæstinus. Sir G. Wilkinson has met (although but rarely) with the figure of an ass-headed deity, or demon, in Egyptian sculptures.

Fig. 13.

PART IV.

THE FIGURED MONUMENTS OF GNOSTICISM.

ΤΩΙ ΝΙΚΩΝΤΙ Δ
ΑΠΟ ΤΟΥ ΜΑ
ΔΩΣΩ ΑΥΤΩΙ ΦΑΓΕΙΝ
ΤΟ ΜΑΝΝΑ ΤΟΥ ΚΕΚΡΥΜΜΕΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ
ΔΩΣΩ ΑΥΤΩ ΨΗΦΟΝ ΛΕΥΚΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙ
ΤΗΝ ΨΗΦΟΝ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΚΑΙΝΟΝ ΓΕΓΡΑΜΜΕΝ
ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΕΓΝΩ ΕΙ ΜΗ Ο ΛΑΜΒΑΝΩΝ.

THE FIGURED MONUMENTS OF GNOSTICISM.

GNOSTIC SIGLÆ, SYMBOLS, LEGENDS EXPLAINED.

The inscriptions in Greek characters upon Gnostic talismans are frequently interspersed with mystic figures, formed out of straight lines set at right angles to each other, and intermingled with dots. These lines Bellermann plausibly enough supposes to represent the "sacred lots," of the same nature as the celebrated *sortes Antiates*, held in the hands of the much-consulted Fortuna of Antium. In their usual form these lots were only little sticks and balls, taken up by the handful from an urn, and thrown at random on the ground. The diviner examined the patterns thus produced by their casual collocation, and predicted the future from them according to the rules of his art. Bellermann goes on to suppose that the figures on our talismans represent certain configurations of the lots, regarded as peculiarly lucky to the consulter. This explanation is supported by the Geomancy of the modern Arabs,* where lines drawn at haphazard on the sand by a stick held between the fingers are interpreted by persons professing that method of divination. Our own divination, by means of tea-grounds, is carried on upon the same principle, the fortuitous arrangement of the

* "Each tribe either found or introduced in the Caaba their domestic worship; the temple was adorned or defiled with 360 idols of men, eagles, lions, and antelopes; and most conspicuous was the statue of Hebal, of *red agate*, holding in his hand seven arrows, without heads or feathers, the instruments and symbols of profane divination."— Gibbon, chap. 42.)

particles producing to the experienced eye definite pictures and letters of the alphabet.

These Siglæ, however, may possibly have had another origin. The regular badge of the *Magus*, as prescribed in the Vendidad, is a bundle of divining-rods—three, seven, or nine in number. Hence the rebuke of Hosea: "My people ask counsel of *sticks*, and their *staff* declareth it unto them." These same divining-rods placed upon the altar are commonly represented upon the Magian signets, bearing for official type the Mobed at his devotions; and may therefore be supposed to have passed down to the talisman-makers of later times.*

That others amongst these angular forms are numerals is certain from the nature of the case, and from Horapollo's express declaration that the Egyptians represented 10 by the figure ⌐, and 100 by the same four times repeated in the form of a square, thus ⊓. *Ten* being the "perfect number" of the Valentinian creed (whose fountain-head was Alexandria), its frequent appearance amongst the religious formulæ of the sect is naturally to be looked for. The primitive Egyptian numerals were of the simplest kind, but their abbreviated combinations ultimately became distinct symbols for the different days of the month, and out of these the Arab astrologers concocted their own system. This circumstance affords reason for another solution—that some of these siglæ indicate the particular days connected with the astrological intention of the talisman.†

And besides all these, there is every probability that these siglæ include actual cuneiform letters, belonging to the Assyrian alphabet, but their forms somewhat corrupted by the semi-

* The ancient Teutons practised the same method of divining future events. A shoot of a fruit tree was cut into pieces, each being distinguished by certain marks, *notis quibusdam*, probably meaning "Runes." The consulter threw them down at random on a white cloth, with eyes turned to heaven he took up three separately, and interpreted the response from the inscriptions upon them.—(Tacitus, Germ. x.)

† Some of these siglæ may be recognised in the inscriptions in an unknown character, cut in the hard sandstone rock, and very numerous about Silsilis, Upper Nubia, where they accompany figures of elephants, giraffes, and ostriches—all animals long since extinct in that country. Specimens were published by Greville Chester in the 'Archæological Journal' for 1864, p. 274.

Greek wizard, who employed them in ignorance of their true nature. The Assyrian language being considered as late as the times of Iamblichus peculiarly grateful to the heavenly Powers, what more reasonable than that some at least of these invocations should continue to be couched in their original cyphers? Be it remembered, the cuneiform character was the national one of the whole Persian empire down to the Macedonian conquest, and must have been preserved in religious usages long after that event by the Magi. They, at least, were a very unlikely class to trouble themselves about the Greek alphabet or Greek literature, professing, like the Talmudists, a pious horror for both. This is well exemplified on the restoration of the native dynasty under the Sassanians; Greek, employed for four centuries by the Parthian line, is at once expelled from the coins by the Pehlevi character, true daughter of the primitive cuneiform. There is moreover one all-sufficient reason for seeking the origin of these inexplicable siglæ at Babylon: they constituted a religious stenography. The Babylonians "attached to each god a certain *numeral*, which may be used in the place of his proper *emblem*, and may even stand for his *name* in an inscription" (Rawlinson, 'Anc. Monarchies,' iii., 466). To give those of the principal deities:

First Triad: Anu = 60; Bel = 50; Hoa = 40.
Second Triad: Moon = 30; Sun = 20; Air = 10.
Beltis, or Mylitta = 15; Nergal, or Mars = 12; Niu, or Saturn = 10.

Of the other planets the numerals have not been discovered; but their names are, Nebo, Mercury; Merodach, Jupiter; Ishtar, Venus.

The great gods are Anu, *Pluto*; Bel, *Jupiter*; Hoa, *Neptune*. Their consorts are, respectively, Anat, Beltis, Davkana. The minor gods are, Sin, or Hurke, answering to the later Lunus Deus; San, the Sun; Vid, the Æther. Their respective consorts are, "The Great Lady"; Gula, or Anahit; Tula, or Shula. The Pythagoreans had a symbolism of the same nature, denoting Minerva by an *equilateral triangle*, Apollo by *unity*; Strife, by the numeral *two*; Justice, by *three*, and the Supreme Being by *four* (Plat. De Is. et Os. 75).* I find a very strong confirmation

* In the Egyptian Ritual papyrus, Thoth is addressed as "the second Hermes by is *mystic name* of the god A."

of my belief that the Gnostic *Powers* were similarly designated by their numerals, in Raspe's gem, No. 601, where CENΓEN is inscribed in the exergue under a serpent coiled into a cartouche containing several of the siglæ under consideration. Now this legend (to be explained farther on) is, when written in full, always followed by the names of the Archangels, whence it may justly be inferred the same names are still here, but represented in their mystic form.*

"The Great Names" constitute the very essence of every Gnostic spell. To begin, therefore, with their consideration is obviously the most appropriate and propitious mode of approaching this part of our work—pandere res alta terra et caligine mersas. There are three titles perpetually occurring, and consequently to be supposed denoting beings of the highest importance in the Gnostic hierarchy of heaven. Their meaning was unknown until the fortunate discovery of the grand Valentinian gospels. The Pistis-Sophia informed us (§ 361) that they are the holy Names of the Three Τριδύναμεις, who are ΙΨΑΝΤΑΧ-ΑΙΝΧΕΟΥΧ, a Power emanating from whom resides in the planet Mars; ΒΑΙΝΧΩΩΧ,† in Mercury; and ΠΙCΤΙC CΟΦΙΑ, in Venus. Above this Triad is one still higher, the "Three Unseen Gods," ΑΓΡΑΜΜΑΧΑΜΑΡΕΓ, ΒΑΡΒΗΛΩ (the Heavenly Mother of Jesus), and ΒΔΕΛΛΗ (§ 359).

The "Five Words" written upon the shining vesture sent down to Jesus at His glorification (§ 16) were ZAMA

* The Turks represent the Great Name *Allah* by an oval crossed with intersecting lines, which is often seen stamped on their old armour, for an amulet. Now this very mark occurs in the Gnostic set, and it is more than probable that its true meaning is preserved in the Turkish tradition.

† In Goodwin's 'Ma c Papyrus' the Serapean Divination (No. 1) names this Power: "Appear and give heed unto him who was manifested before Fire and Snow, Βαινχωωχ, for Thou art he that did make manifest Light and Snow, Terrible-eyed-thundering-and-lightning-swift-footed-one." This papyrus, now in the British Museum, was bought of Atanasi, Swedish Consul at Alexandria: who sold several others of the same nature to the Leyden Library. All are supposed to have been found together in a catacomb at Thebes, and to have formed the stock of some magician of the second century of our era, as the handwriting leads us to infer. Goodwin edited the Brit. Museum specimen for the Cambridge Antiquarian Society in 1852, and enriched it with notes giving invaluable assistance to all who study Gnostic remains.

ZAMA ωZZA PAXAMA ωZAI—"The robe, the glorious robe of my strength." The same revelation furthermore imparts to the faithful the mystic names of the planets. "Hearken now, I will tell unto you the Incorruptible Names of the Planets, which be ωPIMOTΘ, Saturn; MOTNIXOTAΦωP, Mars; TAPΠETANOTΦ, Mercury; XωΣI, Venus; XωNBAΛ, Jupiter. These be the incorruptible names of the same" (§ 362). Of these, the names from each Triad are to be recognised upon talismans, BAINXωωωX most commonly of all; but no example of these planetary appellations has hitherto come to my knowledge.

The Naaseni (says Hippolytus) taught that the universe could not hold together unless the names of the Great Ones (τὰ μεγέθη) were uttered. These were KATAKAT, ΣATAAΣAT, ZEHΣAP. "The first is the name of the *Adamas* who is above; the second, of him who is below; the third of the Jordan that floweth upwards." "Above are Mariamne the Sought-after, and Jothor the great and wise; and Sephora she that seeth; and Moses." According to the text-book of another sect, the Peratæ, XωZZAP is the Power whom the ignorant and profane call Neptune: KAPΦAKOΣHMOXEP is the Steward of the East: EKKABAKAPA of the West; called by the vulgar the Curetes. APIBA is the Ruler of the Winds; ΣωK-ΛAM, or Osiris, rules the twelve hours of the night; ENTω, or Isis, those of the day: her sign is the Dog-star. BHNA is Ceres, or the Left-hand Power of God, presiding over nutrition; MHN is the Right-hand Power that presides over the fruits of the earth. In the same doctrine, *chozzar*, called by the ignorant Neptune, "who converts into a sphere the dodecagonal pyramid, and paints with many colours the gate of that pyramid," has Five Ministers, AOT, AOAI, OTΩ, OTΩAB; the name of the fifth being lost. Hence it is probable that the strings of vowels, so often found on these stones, may contain the names of elementary genii similarly expressed.

Origen (viii. 58) quotes Celsus to the effect, that the Egyptians made six-and thirty (or more) dæmons or ætherial powers preside over the several parts of the body, giving some of their names, Chumis, Chuachumes, Knat, Sichat, Bou, Erou, Eribiou,

Romanor, and Reianoor: "Whoever therefore prefers being in health to sickness, and happiness to trouble, ought to pay all possible honour to these Powers." Origen therefore accuses Celsus of attempting to divert men from the worship of the one God to that of six-and-thirty dæmons, only known to Egyptian magicians, because he cannot understand how "the Name of Jesus, pronounced by the truly faithful," can cure the sick and those possessed by devils; the evidence for which is far stronger than that of the effect of the names of Chnumis, Sichat, and the rest of the Egyptian catalogue. In another place (i. 22) he shows it was not Moses only that knew the name of Abraham and his friendship with God, for that others (pagans) use the words "the God of Abraham" when they are driving out devils. And again the Egyptians use in their rites, from which they promise wonderful effects, the names of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Israel. Also (iv. 33) Origen mentions the use of the form "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob" in incantations, and that the same is often to be met with in books of Magic. He adds that the formula "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, who didst overwhelm the Egyptians and the King of the Egyptians in the Red Sea," was in common use against demons and the Powers of Evil. All this goes to prove that the talismans inscribed with the name of Chnumis and the other thirty-five dæmons named (who now by this assistance may be hereafter recognised) were of a *medicinal* character, whereas those with "Abraham," equally common, were more properly of the nature of talismans.

In the Book of Enoch the Archangel Uriel gives us the mystic names of the two great luminaries: "The names of the Sun are these, one Aryares, the other Tomas. The Moon hath *four* names: the first, Asonga; the second, Ebla; the third, Benase; and the fourth, Erai."

The Pistis-Sophia (§ 125) furnishes the adept with the key to the most important of the numerical cyphers. "These be the Names that I will give unto thee, even from the Infinite One downwards. Write them with a sign (cypher?) that the sons of God may manifest (understand?) them out of this place. This is the Name of the Immortal One, $\overline{\text{ΑΑΑ}}$ $\overline{\omega\omega\omega}$. And this

is the name of the Voice through whose means the Perfect Man is moved, ΙΙΙ. These likewise are the *interpretations* of the names of the Mysteries. The first is AAA, the interpretation thereof ΦΦΦ. The second which is MMM, or which is ωωω; the interpretation whereof is AAA. The third is ΨΨΨ, the interpretation whereof is OOO. The fourth is ΦΦΦ, the interpretation whereof is NNN. The fifth is ΔΔΔ, the interpretation whereof is AAA, the which is over the throne AAA. This is the interpretation of the second AAAA, which is AAAAAAAA, and the same is the interpretation of the whole Name."

To pass from the cyphers, where all is guess work, to the actual inscriptions, engraved legibly enough in the Greek character, but presenting us with what Jerome aptly terms mere "tormenta verborum." Many of the more common formulæ, Bellermann, by the aid of Hebrew, Coptic, and Syriac,* has satisfactorily explained; of others his interpretations are manifestly absurd. AMAPΓEA seems to be the Chaldee *Amarchel*, a president. ANOX XOΛ XNOTBIC, "I am All the Good Spirit, or the Universal genius of good." AIN ΘAPPAI, "The eye shall behold." AΔONAI ΛANTAΛA, "Lord! Thou art the Lamb."† XωCA MIΛAωΘ exactly represents the Hebrew words signifying "He hath seen the Pleroma."

AMΛAXϽ
AMAϐAZ
LZAI

is rendered by Stiechel "Salama zebaam jatzael" = "Peace unto the army of these" (of the celestial Æons)! This agrees with

* Prof. Stiechel, in his essay 'De Gemma Abraxea nondum edita,' Jenae, 1848, has acutely and satisfactorily elucidated some very important formulæ, giving a key to the whole class. The necessity for employing Oriental languages in spells is curiously illustrated by Hippolytus' statement, that the magicians of his time used to write the answers to the questions proposed to their demons, partly in *Hebrew*, partly in Greek letters.

† AP ωPI, followed by the Greek words ΦPACIC, ΦACIC, IACIC, "Declaration," "Manifestation," "Healing," is always attached to a figure of Venus Anadyomene, and admits of the translation "Mountain of Light." The Venus therefore seems adopted here for the "Virgin of Light," who holds so high a place in the celestial hierarchy of the Pistis-Sophia. At any rate the sense of APωPI, "Mountain of Light," strongly favours this acceptation.

the benediction pronounced by the Marcosians in administering the holy unction, "Peace be unto all upon whom this holy Name rests!"

Some of these inscriptions display an evident affectation of obscurity by their transposition of parts of the same word from one line to another, the only key to which is the observing the different sizes of the characters employed, and taking those of the same size as belonging to the "disjecta membra" of the same word. A most instructive example of this artifice is supplied by the legend cut on the reverse of a magnificent Serapis head (Wood), which reads thus:

ΙΑΒΑΤΑΟΡ
ΘΟΝΑΤΗϹΛΑΙ
ΑΡΒΑΘΙ
ΛΑΜ
ΑΩ

This will only be translatable if transposed as follows: ΙΑΒΑΤΑΟΡ . ΘΟΝΑΤΗϹ . ΛΑΙΛΑΜ . ΑΡΒΑΘ . ΙΑΩ. "Jehovah, the Pure Æther, the Fire,* for ever, the Four, Iao," where "the Four" signifies the *Tetrad*, so conspicuous in the Theogony of Marcus. This legend seems much of the same nature as the Greek one cut on a piece of copper (communicated to me by Prof. Ch. Babington): ὁ διὰ πάντων Νοῦς, αἰθὴρ, πῦρ, πνεῦμα; ἐλωεὶν ἐλωεὶν (Elohim). The only word in the first legend not reducible to Hebrew is Θοναρ, but it seems to correspond to the "Æther" of the copper piece, ΑΡΛΑΝΑ ΘΑΜΑΚΑ ΣΑΛΒΑΝΑ ΧΑΜΚΙΜ, "Our Light, let thy goodness grant unto us a full lap": whence the object of such a talisman would seem to be the procuring of fecundity.†

ΑΝΑΚΛΑ ΑΚΔΑΑΘΩΙΩΙ, "Pursue then (my foes) unto destruction, O Lord," is found very appropriately engraven on the reverse of a sphinx, the recognised emblem of power and slaughter.

* ΑΒΡΑΜ, which often occurs in these legends, may perhaps refer to the Rabbinical "Seir-Anpen," the Primitive Man, made up of 213 numbers, the numerical value of the *Hebrew* letters in the name.

† ΗϹ represents the Hebrew word for "Fire": and this explanation is confirmed by the ΤΟ ΦΩϹ ΠΥΡ ΦΛΟΞ accompanying a figure of Phre on a gem elucidated by Froehner in his 'Byrsa,' part i.

ΒΑΡΙΑ ΖΑΣΤΑ ΙΑΩ, "Jehovah the Creator, the Destroyer.' Chaldee slightly corrupted.

ΙΑΘΑΙ, "The providence of God."

ΜΑΘΑΗΕ, "The honour of God."

ΡΕΟΤΗΛΕ, "The will of God."

ΧΩΜΙ, "The power of God."

ΣΒΩ "Wisdom."

These Coptic words thus designate the Five Emanations from the Godhead—viz., Phronesis, Logos, Nous, Dynamis, Sophia.

מֵאִיר עֵינִי

"enlightening mine eye,"

or

מְאִירֵנִי — ii

"enlightening me,"

Meireni M'ireni

If ΗΝΑΜΕΡΩ and ΜΑΡΩΗΝΙ are really the same, it will be conclusive against ii, where the *eni* is an *affix*. The form then might be

עֵינִי מֵאִיר

enimeir.

Query what of the ω?

ΙΘΙ placed on each side of the Chnuphis serpent engraved in green jade (S. S. Lewis) is correct Hebrew for "With me," which gives an appropriate sense if understood as a prayer for the constant presence of the protecting Spirit.

ΜΕΣ ΧΑΝΑΛΩ,* "The Messiah be propitious unto me."

ΜΑΡΩΗΝΙ,* "Enlighten mine eyes."

ΚΑΤΛΑΚΑΤ. The Basilidan name for the Saviour is written by Epiphanius ΚΑΤΛΑΚΑΤΧ; who ridicules it as an expression taken from Isaiah (xxviii. 10) without any regard to the

* The Syrian Alexander Severus expresses his indignation at the sight of a certain notorious rogue, Arabianus, coming to Court, by exclaiming "O Marna, O Jupiter," &c., where his native "Our Lord" he renders by "Jupiter," for the benefit of his Roman hearers. This word the monkish transcribers very naturally converted into "Maria." ΗΝΑΜΕΡΩ, which often accompanies the figure of the Cynocephalus, seems to be equivalent to the phrase in the text: and as that beast belongs to Thoth, god of *knowledge*, this interpretation has at least appropriateness in its favour.

real meaning of the words. Bellermann, however, thinks he has found a more sensible derivation for the title in Arabic, signifying "Strength upon strength," that is, the "All-powerful"; or else in the Coptic KAB, "a lamp," and so implying "The burning and the shining Light."

MOTΘ, "Mother," Plutarch informs us (De Is. et Os.), was a title given to Isis. This word contains a plain allusion to the earth, "lutum Prometheum," whence Man was taken. MOTΘ and IEOTΔ are translated by Sanconiathon as "Hades" and "Only-begotten," the offspring of the Phœnician Cronos.

NOOT for the Coptic NOTT, "God."

MAI MTM TXΛTM ωI, "Being, Fount, Salvation, Food, Iao": implying that Iao is the source, food, life, and salvation of the soul.

OPωPIOTΘ, "Light of Light."*

TAΛA APAIω ωAPAOPO NTOKO NBAI, "Protector, Creator, rule, speak, O Lord," is a very common formula.

ΣEΣEMEN BAPANΓHN IAω, written with many variations, and followed by the names of the great Angels, has been ingeniously deciphered by a learned Hebraist (Rev. R. Sinker) as representing the sound of "Shengab hor anje Jehevoh," "They that stand before the Mountain of God," that is, the Angels of the Presence.†

XAIA, "Life," is seen on a field of the Roman gem bearing two figures of *Providentia*, with the Sun and Moon on the field overhead (Major Pearse).

Three Greek characters often occur in juxtaposition—viz., the E set on its back, a vertical line crossed by two horizontal strokes, and Z. They stand for the numerals 5, 3, and 7, the Triad, Pentad, Heptad—lucky and sacred numbers in the religious notions of the East. For the same reason the inscriptions on our gems will be found to be arranged for the most part in either three, five, or seven lines. This also accounts for the name Iao being often written with its elements repeated

* This legend always goes with the udder-shaped vase of the Isiac rites.

† Γαβριηλ, Μιχαηλ, Ραφαηλ σεν-γε(ν)β αρανγην Ιαω.

ג׳ מ׳ ר׳ שֶׁנְגֶב הַר עַנְגִין יְיָ

σεγεν βαρ ένχε

שׁנגב הר ענג.

ΩΑΙΑΩ,* for the sake of obtaining the venerated numeral, five. And, again, by introducing another vowel, Η, the Holy Name is repeated under five different forms, ΗΑΙ . ΑΙΗ . ΗΙΩ . ΑΙΩ . ΙΑΩ.

The *Priest* officiating, commonly figured in these designs, wears upon his head the "calantica," a square of purple cloth whence spring two flamingo feathers; a badge which made πτερόφορος a synonym for the Egyptian priesthood. The staff in his hand, emblem of his office, has the serpent coiled *five* times about it. This "sceptrum sacerdotale" furnishes the true explanation of the meaning of many ancient insignia, beginning with Moses' wand, then the club of Æsculapius, and closing with its derivative the rod in the spiral of SSS that so constantly goes with the Agathodæmon serpent upon the Chnuphis gems.

As for the *geometrical figures* so often introduced, they may be supposed to have had much the same import here as in the formulæ of the Rosicrucians, who obtained these with other Gnostic paraphernalia probably by tradition from the Arabs; for their pretended founder, the Great Unknown A. S., is declared to have acquired his small learning at the College of Damascus. In their system the Square stands for the Four Elements; the Triangle for the body, the spirit, and the life: and also for Sun, Moon, and Mercury. The last Triad Paracelsus interprets by *salt*, *sulphur*, *quicksilver*—the three radical forces of Nature according to his system. The *Rhombus* represents the Orphic Egg, out of which issued the whole Creation.

Phœnician Numerals may, from the very nature of the case, be looked for amongst the marks that cannot be referred to the Greek alphabet. The notation was simplicity itself: *one* to *nine* being expressed by vertical strokes, so many times repeated; *ten* by a horizontal one; *twenty* by two such parallel to each other, sometimes slightly curving together. In the

* Stiechel has a very ingenious explanation of this permutation of vowels; he makes it express different tenses of the Hebrew verb *to exist*, thus—

ΙΕΩΑΙΗ = vivit existens.
ΑΙΩΟΥΕΥ = isque est Iao.
ΑΙΗΑΗΙΩΗ = existens vivit.
ΩΑΙΗΟΥΕ = isque Iao.

Palmyrene notation *five* has a special cypher, a sloping line upon which in the middle stands another at right angles.

It was to be expected that Samaritan characters should make their appearance upon the productions of a religion of which the reputed founder was a Samaritan, whose professed followers also formed an important sect as late as the times of Hippolytus. Stiechel interprets the reverse legend on his above-quoted gem as having its commencing words written in this alphabet: thus—

ΔΔ Z	=	qui tenet.
VI	=	signum sat.
PAΦAω	=	ejus sanat.
PPΓVΦω	=	exorcista corpus.
TABPII	=	facultates.
IHIAII	=	et vitam.
IIII	=	fiat! fiat!

He also points out that the important word "Auth" = *sign* or *token*, is written in these legends in four different ways: ΘVO, EVO, EIW, VIE.

It is possible that in certain legends the letters, taken in an order known to one having the key, would give a definite meaning; and this suspicion is supported by the reversing of some of the characters. Certain it is that the Donatists adopted such a device in order to disguise their proscribed war-cry from the victorious Catholics. A door-lintel at Tebessa exhibits the well-known formula thus—

VDES DICA
EOLAY ☧ SVM
D

to be read by the brethren "Deo laudes dicamus." A second lintel bears the same in monogram.

The most famous spell of all, ABRACADABRA, is first mentioned by Serenus Sammonicus, the most learned Roman of his times, and physician to Caracalla, to whom he dedicated his poetical 'Guide to Health,' entitled 'De Medicina præcepta saluberrima.' This work, remarks Spartian, was the favourite study of the unfortunate Cæsar, Geta, for attachment to whose cause this true son of Apollo was afterwards put to death by the imperial fratricide. Severus Alexander also, "who had known and loved Serenus," greatly admired his poetry, putting

him on a level with Horace, as Lampridius' expressions seem to intimate. This high authority orders the word to be written out in the form of an inverted cone, and declares it of virtue against all diseases.

> "Thou shalt on paper write the spell divine,
> Abracadabra called, in many a line;
> Each under each in even order place,
> But the last letter in each line efface.
> As by degrees the elements grow few
> Still take away, but fix the residue,
> Till at the last one letter stands alone
> And the whole dwindles to a tapering cone.
> Tie this about the neck with flaxen string;
> Mighty the good 'twill to the patient bring.
> Its wondrous potency shall guard his head—
> And drive disease and death far from his bed."

The belief in the virtue of this recipe flourished through the Middle Ages. It seems alluded to in the 'Dialogue on Masonry,' ascribed by Leland to Henry VI.; for amongst "the things that Masons conceal" is "the winnynge of the facultye of *Abrac*": perhaps signifying the possession of this mystical arrangement of letters: unless, indeed, one chooses to suspect in this "facultye" a deeper sense, some traditionary knowledge of the ancient Abraxas religion. Again, De Foe mentions how people commonly wore the word written in the manner above prescribed, as a safeguard against infection during the Great Plague of London.

As for the etymology of the word, the most satisfactory yet offered is the compound of the Hebrew *Ha-Brachah*, "blessing," and Dobara, "speak"; meaning the "Blessing of the Mystic Name"—that is, utter the Tetragrammaton, invoke the Holy Name of Jehovah, itself the mightiest of charms.*

It is very remarkable, considering its high repute, that no Gnostic stone bearing such an inscription should be known to exist. On the other hand that normal address to Iao, ΑΒΛΑΝΘΑΛΛΒΑ, "Thou art our Father!" is so found on talismanic jaspers arranged in the exact pattern recommended by

* By the mere utterance whereof the philosopher Theosebius, though unacquainted with magic, was able to cast out devils from all who applied to him for aid.

Serenus for the paper spell, and probably so done in compliance with his directions. One is strongly tempted to discover in this same *Ha-Brachah* the real origin of the equally famous title "Abraxas." The Greek letters, constantly in use for numerals, at once presented their numeric value in every word to the practised eye of the Kabalist.

The celebrated letter of Christ to Abgarus was (according to Cedrenus) sealed with the initials of the seven Hebrew words, whose Greek interpretation was Θεὸς Θεοθὲν θαῦμα θεῖον. At the mere sight of the seal the king was healed of his gout and of his *black* leprosy, all but a slight trace upon the face remaining to be cleansed by the waters of baptism. Cedrenus' Greek reads like a popular formula, and may serve to explain the legend on the reverse of an Abraxas gem in my possession, ΙΧΘΕΘΩΗΙΑΙΑΩ, as to be read Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ Ιαὼ, "Jesus Christ, God of God, Jehovah." This inscription encloses the letters ΙΗ placed conspicuously in the centre, and which probably represent, as nearly as the two discordant alphabets allow, the Hebrew letters *Jod*, *He*, the Kabalistic name of the *Tikkan*, "Express Image," or First Emanation of the Godhead.

The Crescent and Seven Stars, amongst which are scattered the mystical Seven Vowels, has for reverse this formula:—

ΙΦΟΙΡΧΑ
ΖΑΛΙΡΕΧΕΖ
ΟΙΛΠΟΒΕΝ
ΘΗΛΑΤΟ

Its first line, but written ΑΧΘΙΩΦΙ, is cut in beautiful characters on the reverse of a caduceus within a wreath. Sinker reads it as עקר יפי, *Essence, Beauty:* probably the rest are names of virtues. It is inconceivable that the Sephiroth—mightiest spell of all—should be omitted in these gems. It is made up of the *Ten* attributes of Jehovah—viz., The Crown, Wisdom, Prudence, Security, Magnificence, Goodness, Glory, Victory, Fortitude, Kingdom. There is consequently a probability that these Names often lurk in the phonetic Hebrew, enveloping all in darkness. We have for guide the analogy of the present Arab talismans, consisting of the ninety-nine epithets of Allah written on a scroll.

THE NAME ΙΑΩ.

Diodorus Siculus, when enumerating the different legislators of antiquity, says, "Amongst the Jews Moses pretended that the god surnamed *Iao* gave him his laws" (i. 94). And this is elucidated by the remark of Clemens Alexandrinus, that the Hebrew *Tetragrammaton*, or Mystic Name, is pronounced ΙΑΟΥ, and signifies "He that is and shall be." Theodoret states that the same four letters were pronounced by the Samaritans as ΙΑΒΕ (*Jave*); by the Jews as ΙΑΩ. Jerome (upon Psalm viii.) says, "The Name of the Lord" amongst the Hebrews is of four letters, *Iod*, *He*, *Vau*, *He*, which is properly the Name of God, and may be read as ΙΑΗΟ (*Iaho*) (that is in *Latin* characters), which is held by the Jews for unutterable. The author of the 'Treatise on Interpretations' says, "The Egyptians express the name of the Supreme Being by the seven Greek vowels ΙΕΗΩΟΥΑ":* which sufficiently explains the mighty potency ascribed to this formula by the inspired author of the 'Pistis-Sophia,' and equally so its frequent appearance upon the talismans now under consideration.

Rabbi Tarphon (Tryphon), who could remember the Second Temple, noticed that the Ineffable Name, though occurring a hundred times in the course of the daily service, was "rather

* According to the Talmud, the Name of God, which was communicated only to the most pious of the priesthood, was composed of *twelve* letters. And upon our talismans the vowels inclosing ΙΑΩ are often found repeated so as to make up that number; whence it may be inferred that their union represents the same ineffable sound. In the same passage mention is made of another Name of God, consisting of forty-two letters, which in its turn may serve to account for the lines of often-repeated vowels similarly to be met with.

Dante alludes to a curious tradition that the name of God, revealed to Adam, was I, which succeeding times changed into *Eli*:—

"Pria ch' io scendessi all' infernale ambascia,
I s' appellava in terra il sommo Bene,
Onde vien la letizia che mi fascia.
ELI si chiamo; poi, e ciò conviene,
Chè l' uso dei mortali è come fronda,
In ramo, che sen va, ed altra viene."
('Parad.' xxvi. 133).

warbled than *pronounced.*" A precious hint this, as indicating how the Gnostic strings of boneless vowels give an approximation to the audible and yet unuttered sound. Since the destruction of the Temple, the Name has never been heard in prayer, or pronounced aloud. It is communicated, indeed, to every Rabbi, after his ordination, but not in full. One half of it is told; the rest he is left to make out for himself.

The first idea of an "Ineffable Name," and all its inherent virtues, evidently came to the Egyptians (from whom the Jews borrowed it) from the Hindoo doctrine respecting the title AUM,—itself, like the AIΩ, trilateral—representing the Triad, Brahma-Vishnu-Siva: A standing for the Creator, U for the Preserver, M for the Destroyer. The connection between Indian and Egyptian mythology is certain, however difficult to account for, the names of the principal deities in the latter having the appearance of pure Sanscrit. Thus Isis signifies in that tongue the *Mistress;* Tat and Sat, *Virtue* and *Power;* Serapis, Sripa, the *Blood-drinker;* Nila, *Blue-water*, &c. The original identity of the two religious systems no one can doubt who has *intelligently* studied the monuments of each: but which country instructed the other?

The balance of probabilities is strongly in favour of India, the confinement of the peculiar system within the narrow limits of Egypt betokening an importation by a *colony* from some very remote source. Traces of a very ancient intercourse between the two countries are discernible, though very dimly, in history. The Periplus of the Red Sea mentions that as late as Cæsar's time the town Endæmon on that coast was the entrepôt where the Indian and Egyptian traders used annually to meet. In prehistoric times therefore it is conceivable that Brahminical missionaries may have laboured amongst the aborigines of the Valley of the Nile. This religious analogy manifests itself in the meanest details, in the sacred titles as well as attributes. For example, as the Brahmins teach that each of the letters A, U, M envelops a great mystery, so does the *Pistis-Sophia* ('Prayers of the Saviour,' § 358) interpret the I, A, Ω, as the summary of the Gnostic, or Valentinian, creed. "I signifies *All goeth out;* A, *All returneth within;* Ω, *There shall be an end of*

ends": thus expressing the grand doctrines of the *Emanation*, the *Return*, and the *Annihilation*, or rather reabsorption, of the Universe.*

To turn now to Greece—in the same way as *Abraxas* is no other than a numerical title of the Solar god, so does *Iao* actually make its appearance as an epithet of the same divinity. Macrobius (Sat. i. 18), whilst labouring to prove that the Sun-worship was in truth the sole religion of Paganism, under whatever name it was disguised, gives a notice very much to our purpose. The Apollo of Claros, when consulted as to the true nature of the god called Ἰαὸς, gave the following response:—

"The sacred things ye learn, to none disclose,
A little falsehood much discretion shows;
Regard *Iaos* as supreme above,
In winter Pluto, in spring's opening Jove,
Phœbus through blazing summer rules the day,
Whilst autumn owns the mild *Iaos*' † sway."

Here we find Iao expressly recognised as the title of the Supreme God whose physical representative is the Sun. Again we have Dionysos or Bacchus added to the list by Orpheus, who sings

"Jove, Pluto, Phœbus, Bacchus, all are One."

A distinct recognition this of the grand principle of Brahminism—that all the different deities are but representations of the different attributes of the One. The same truth is curiously expressed upon a talisman (Hertz collection) which at the same time sets forth the triune nature of the Supreme Being whose visible type is the Sun. It is a *heart-shaped* piece of basalt engraved with seated figures of Ammon and Ra (the Zeus and Helios of the Greeks), with the sacred Asp erect between them. The reverse bears the invocation neatly cut in characters of the third century—

ΕΙϹ ΒΑΙΤ ΕΙϹ ΑΘΩΡ ΜΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΒΙΑ ΕΙϹ ΔΕ ΑΧΩΡΙ
ΧΑΙΡΕ ΠΑΤΕΡ ΚΟϹΜΟΤ ΧΑΙΡΕ ΤΡΙΜΟΡΦΕ ΘΕΟϹ

* This has a remarkable analogy with the Brahminical definition of God as "the Self-existing, Eternal, Supreme Being, who is the Cause of everything, and into whom everything is finally absorbed"?

† ἀβρὸν Ἰαῶ, where the epithet seems suggested by the name Abraxas so generally coupled with it.

"There is One Bäit, One Athor, their power is one and the same, there is One Achori. Hail Father of the universe, hail God under three forms!" Concerning the three figures a word is necessary in explanation of their titles. As for the hawk-head Ra, Horapollo gives for reason of the type: "The *hawk* stands for the Supreme Mind, and for the intelligent soul. The hawk is called in the Egyptian language '*Baieth*,' from *bai* soul, and *eth* heart, which organ they consider the seat or inclosure of the soul." A sufficient explanation this for the shape in which the talisman is formed. *Achoreus*, the virtuous priest-councillor of the last of the Ptolemies (see Lucan), derives his name from the sacred serpent here invoked.

That *Iaos* was recognised by the Greeks as an epithet for the Sun in the autumnal quarter has been shown from Macrobius. The philosophical interpreters of the ancient mythology discovered in *Dionysos* also a mere type of the same luminary. "One is Zeus, Hades, Helios, and Dionysos." And Serapis is substituted for the last in an oracle quoted by Julian: nor must it be forgotten that the main object of Macrobius in the above-quoted dissertation is to prove, that Serapis is a representative of the various powers of the Solar deity all combined in one figure. Again, to the same effect, comes Virgil's famous apostrophe—

> "Vos, O clarissima mundi,
> Lumina labentem qui cœlo ducitis annum,
> Liber et alma Ceres!"

where "Bacchus" and "Ceres" do no more than interpret Osiris and Isis, the Sun and Moon. Here lies the reason for equipping Bacchus with *horns* in some of his statues.

"Accedant capiti cornua *Bacchus* eris," says Sappho to Phaon. For in Hebrew a *radiated* and a *horned* head is expressed by the same word. When Moses came down from the Mount, "cornuta erat facies ejus," according to the version of the Vulgate; and on the strength of this mistranslation Christian art hath ever graced the Jewish lawgiver with these appendages.

In this very title *Iao* undoubtedly lies the origin of the universal persuasion of the ancients that the Jehovah of the

Jews—whose name was thus expressed in Greek letters—was no other than the Egyptian Bacchus. For this notion they found strong support in the Golden Vine which formed the sole visible decoration of the Temple; in the "blowing the trumpets at the New Moon," and the custom of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles in huts made of leafy boughs, accompanied with many of the ceremonies used at the Grecian Dionysia: "Quia sacerdotes eorum tibia tympanis concinebant, hedera vinciebantur, vitisque aurea templo reperta" (Tacit, Hist. v. 5.) This opinion as to the real nature of the Jewish worship Tacitus quotes as the one generally held by the learned of his own times, although he cannot bring himself to accept it as satisfactory—although merely on the grounds that the gloomy and unsocial character of the religion seemed to disprove its relationship to the merry worship of the "god of wine," the only character in which the Romans recognised Bacchus. Nevertheless this ancient theory has found supporters in modern times, notably in the overlearned Dr. Stanley, rector of St. George the Martyr, who (without giving much scandal to his own easy-going generation) advocated this heterodox opinion in an elaborate treatise which puts to shame the boldest flights of the 'Essays and Reviews,' or even the interpretations of our indiscreet apostle to the Zulus. Ludicrously enough, the German Jews still celebrate the Feast of Purim, and the Fall of Haman, by getting as royally drunk as their means afford, and thus to the present day do their best to perpetuate the old Roman aspersion. Amongst the later Gnostics, indeed, some rites were unmistakably borrowed from the Bacchanalia, singularly modified by Christian doctrine. Epiphanius relates (Hæres. xxxvii.) how that "they kept a tame serpent in a chest or *sacred ark*, and piled loaves upon a table before the same, and then called upon the serpent to come forth. Whereupon, opening of himself the ark, he would come forth, mount upon the table, and twine about the loaves, which they broke in pieces, and distributed amongst the worshippers, calling this their 'Perfect Sacrifice' and their 'Eucharist.'"

Another explanation as to the true character of the god

named Iao must not be passed over in silence, however little foundation it may have in truth, seeing that it is supported by the authority of the learned historian of Gnosticism, Jacques Matter. The Moon to the Egyptians, as to the Orientals of to-day, was of the *masculine* gender, and was designated by the phonetic name *Aah* or *Ioh*. Thoth was sometimes identified with this deity; and therefore Thoth's emblem, the ibis, accompanied with the crescent, bears the legend *Ioh*, "because (says Plutarch) Mercury attends the Moon in her journey round the earth in the same way as Hercules doth the Sun." When Thoth, *Tat*, appears as Mercury he has the head of an ibis; but in his character of the Moon-god, or *Deus Lunus*, he shows the face of a man supporting the lunar crescent enclosing the sun's disk and surmounted by a double plume.

Hence came the notion mentioned by Plutarch, that "the Egyptians call the Moon the Mother of Creation, and say it is of both sexes": and to the same effect Spartian (Caracalla, vii.) explains that the Egyptians in the mysteries (*mystice*) call the Moon a male, though designating it a female in ordinary speech. He adds that the people of Carrhal (famed for its great temple of Deus Lunus) hold that "whatsoever man thinks the moon should be called of the feminine gender shall pass his life a slave unto women, whereas he that holds it to be a male deity shall rule over his wife and be secured against all female treachery." A very sufficient reason this for the fondness of Spartian's contemporaries for wearing in their signet rings the *vera effigies* of the Carrhene god, a youth in a Phrygian cap, his bust supported on the crescent that gives his name. This elegant effeminate lunar genius is in truth no other than the modernized and tasteful version of the grim old Assyrian "Sin," pictured in the Ninevitish monuments as an aged man leaning on his staff as he floats through the heavens on the crescent, presenting a ludicrous resemblance to our popular idea of the "Man in the Moon." A blue calcedony in my possession fully illustrates Plutarch's title of "Mother of Creation." It exhibits a perfect hermaphrodite figure wearing the Egyptian head-dress, and squatting down so as more clearly to display its bisexual nature: below creeps a snail surmounted by a

butterfly, the well-understood emblems of lasciviousness and life, the fount of propagation.

All this brings us to Matter's theory (based on a statement of Origen's), that *Iao*, *Adonai*, *Sabaoth* signified the genii of the Moon, the Sun, and the Planets—being far inferior in power and even antagonistic to *Abraxas*, who is the actual representative of the Supreme Source of Light. Matter therefore explains the warlike attitude in which the Abraxas-god is regularly depicted as declaring his office of scaring away the Adversary, or *demon*, *Iao*, who is expressed by his *name* alone, placed in the lowest part of the scene, to denote his inferiority. But the authority of the monuments themselves is more than sufficient to upset such an interpretation of the meaning given to them by the actual manufacturers. The doctrine mentioned by Origen was, it cannot be denied, that of the more recent sect, which set itself above all old Egyptian or Hebrew tradition: but it most assuredly was not of the immense body of primitive Kabbalistic Gnostics who excogitated and put their trust in the *sigils* that they have bequeathed to us in such fantastical profusion. These talisman-makers evidently held *Thoth* and *Moses* in equal reverence: they had nothing to do with the Valentinians, who had an obvious motive for exalting their newly-invented invisible *Tetrad*, by so immeasurably degrading below it the most venerated names of the old religion. The Valentinians were Greeks by education, really drawing their inspiration from Pythagoras and Plato, and only too well pleased with the opportunity of venting their natural spite upon the most cherished ideas of the Alexandrine Kabbalists, the grand fabricants of our talismans, those veritable "Pierres d'Israel."

The *Pistis-Sophia* continually introduces, as a most important actor in its scenes of the judgment and purification of the soul, "the great and good Iao, ruler of the Middle Sphere," who when he looks down into the places of torment causes the souls therein imprisoned to be set at liberty. The very collocation of the words on our talismans clearly denotes that *Adonai*, *Sabaoth*, are equally with *Abraxas* the titles of Iao, who is the god actually represented by the symbolical figure these

words accompany. What else would be the motive for their collocation in a prayer like this (on a gem published by Matter himself)—"Iao, Abraxas, Adonai, Holy Name, Holy Powers,* defend Vibia Paulina from every evil spirit"? And, again, these same names perpetually occur united together, and followed by the address ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΛΒΑ, "Thou art our Father"; CEMEC ΕΙΛΑΜ, "Eternal Sun"; a mode of adoration that could not possibly have been applied to beings of a discordant, much less of an antagonistic, nature to each other. Besides, if Abraxas were the opponent and ultimate destroyer of Iao, it would have been absurd to put the names of the two in such close union, the latter even taking precedence; each, too, being equally invoked in the accompanying prayer, and honoured with the same epithets of majesty. Moreover the composite figure, or Pantheus, which, as all writers agree, represents the actual god Abraxas, is much more frequently inscribed with the name ΙΑΩ than with ΑΒΡΑCΑΞ; and nevertheless, though the former name stands alone, it is followed by the same glorification, "Thou art our Father," &c., as when the two names are engraved in juxtaposition. It is moreover quite opposed to all the rules of symbolism to represent the one actor in a scene by his proper figure or emblem, and to indicate the other by the simple letters of his name: and equally repugnant to common sense to depict the figure of the god with the *name* of his adversary placed in the most conspicuous portion of the tableau. The absurdity is as great as though in Christian art one should paint a Crucifix with *Satan's* name in the place of the holy I . N . R . I, and give for explanation the hostility of the two personages. And lastly, it has been already shown that the numerical or Kabbalistic value of the name Abraxas directly refers to the Persian title of the god, "Mithras," Ruler of the year, worshipped from the earliest times under the apellation of Iao. Matter himself

* A parallel to this form still exists in the Turkish amulet composed of the ninety-and-nine epithets of Allah written on a paper, and believed to possess wondrous protective power. The spirit of all Oriental religions is to glorify the one object of adoration by heaping upon him a multitude of honorific titles expressive of his various attributes. Amulets of this and various other kinds are regularly sold at the mosques.

publishes (Pl. iii. 2) a gem that should have convinced him of his error, had he not overlooked the force of its legend. The type is Horus seated on the lotus, inscribed ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ ΙΑΩ—an address exactly parallel to the so frequent ΕΙϹ ΖΕΤϹ ϹΑΡΑΠΙ on the contemporary Heathen gems; and therefore only to be translated by "Abraxas is the One Jehovah."

The "Great Name" with its normal titles is often to be observed interpolated by a Gnostic hand upon works of a better period and creed, but whose subjects were fancied analogous to the ideas conveyed by the Iao Pantheus: such as Phœbus in his car, the Lion—House of the Sun, the Sphinx emblem of royalty, and the Gorgon's Head of the Destructive Force, or of Providence.* But the most interesting of such *adopted* types that has come to my knowledge, as unmistakably pointing out the deity really understood by the name Abraxas, is a work discovered by myself amongst the miscellanea of a small private collection (Bosanquet). In this we behold the familiar Pantheus with head of cock, cuirassed body, and serpent-legs brandishing the whip and driving the car of Sol,† in the exact attitude of its proper occupant, Phœbus. In the exergue is the salutation ϹΑΒΑΩ, "Glory unto thee": on the reverse, in a cartouche formed by a coiled asp—precisely as the Hindoos write the Ineffable Name ΑΥΜ—are engraved the titles ΙΑΩ ΑΒΡΑΣΑΞ, attesting that one deity alone is meant, and that one to be the Ruler of the Sun.

* The holy name has often been added to intagli of a foreign nature merely for the sake of turning them into talismans: for example, on the reverse of a heliotrope with Victory, inscribing a shield (R. S. Williams, Utica, U.S.).

† Exactly as Serapis (also a type of the Sun-god) makes his appearance upon an Alexandrian coin of Hadrian's, which has been already cited (section "Abraxas gems"). The god is giving the benediction with his right hand, and holds a sceptre in his left. Upon another coin of the same emperor and mint he is seated on the Ram, clearly meaning the Sun in that sign, and perhaps having no deeper meaning than the date of the month when coined.

ABRAXAS, NEW TYPE OF.

A most singular variation upon the normal type of the Abraxas pantheus gives him the head of Serapis for that of the usual cock. In the field between the serpents are the genital organs, of disproportionate size, represented in a state of rest, not as the *fascinum* properly appear on amulets; and unmistakably displaying the seal of circumcision. This circumstance is another proof to be added to all those previously observed, that the fabricators of this class of talismans were the Egyptian Jews. As the distinguishing principle of the Gnosis in all its forms was the reprobation of the "doing the work of the Demiurgus"—that is, the propagation of the species—it is evident that the object of this symbolism was not of a religious kind. It is probable that the idea was to produce a talisman of medicinal use, perhaps for the cure of impotence or other affections of the parts represented. Of medicinal talismans, expressing their purpose by the legends they bear, numerous examples have been already published. The one now described was made known to me through an impression brought by the Rev. S. S. Lewis of a jasper in the Bourgignon collection at Rome. Another very uncommon subject in the same collection is a skeleton seated on a throne, holding a lance, or perhaps sceptre. Although perfectly corresponding with the mediæval representation of Death, yet the spirited though rude extension of the intaglio is that of the earlier Gnostic period, and the idea intended was that of a *larva*, not that of the Destroying Power. In the Stosch Cabinet is a similar figure borne along in a car by steeds as fleshless as himself, like the Wild Hunter of the German legend.

Fig. 14.

ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF THESE FORMULÆ.

The *interpretation* of Gnostic legends and the nature of the deity to whom they were addressed have been thus far the subjects of our inquiry: the next step is to search contemporary writers for information as to the *special purpose* for which the talismans so enriched were originally manufactured. The motive for placing in the coffin of the defunct *illuminato* these "words of power" graven on scrolls of lead, plates of bronze, the gems we are considering, and doubtless to an infinitely greater extent on more perishable materials, derives much light from the description Epiphanius gives (Hær. xxxvi.) of the ceremony whereby the Heracleonitæ prepared their dying brother for the next world. They sprinkled his head with water mingled with oil and opobalsamum, repeating at the same time the form of words used by the Marcosians in baptism, in order that his *Inner Man*, thus provided, might escape the vigilance of the Principalities and Powers whose domains he was about to traverse, and mount up unseen by any to the Pleroma from which he had originally descended. Their priests therefore instructed the dying man that as he came before these Powers he was to address them in the following words: "I, the son from the Father, the Father pre-existing but the son in the present time, am come to behold all things both of others and of my own, and things not altogether of others but belonging unto Achamoth (*Wisdom*), who is feminine and hath created them for herself. But I declare my own origin from the Pre-existing One, and I am going back unto my own from which I have descended." By the virtue of these words he will elude the Powers, and arrive at the Demiurgus in the eighth sphere, whom again he must thus address: "I am a precious vessel, superior to the female power who made thee, inasmuch as thy mother knoweth not her own origin, whereas I know myself, and I know whence I am; and I invoke the Incorruptible Wisdom who is in the father and in the mother of your mother that hath no father,

nay, not even a male consort, but being a female sprung from a female that created thee, though she herself knows not her mother, but believes herself to exist alone. But I invoke the mother." At this address the Demiurgus is struck with confusion (as well he might be), and forced to acknowledge the baseness of his origin: whereupon the inner man of the Gnostic casts off his bondage as well as his own *angel*, or soul, which remains with the Demiurgus for further use, and ascends still higher into his proper place. For every man is made up of *body*, *soul*, and *inner man*, this last being the more spiritual nature. This same belief was the popular one of the Jews, as appears from Rhoda's exclamation at the unhoped-for reappearance of Peter, whom she supposed already put to death.

The Achamoth here mentioned is the Sephandomad of Zoroaster, the Wisdom of the later Jews—so fully described by the pseudo-Solomon under that title (vii. 25). "She is the Spirit of the virtue of God, the pure emanation of the brightness of the Almighty, the brightness of the eternal Light, the mirror without spot of his majesty, the image of his goodness." "Wisdom hath made her house upon seven pillars." The *naked woman*, or Venus Anadyomene, so often seen on these gems, is the same idea expressed by the ancient Greek type. One given by Caylus ('Rec. d'Ant.' vi. Pl. 21) explains its destination in terms sufficiently clear, despite their corrupt Byzantine orthography: ΙΑΩ ϹΑΒΑΩ ΑΔΟΝΑΙ ΗΚΑΙ ΕΛΛΑΞΕΙΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΤΑΡΤΑΡΟΥ ϹΚΟΤΙΝ, "Jehovah, Sabaoth, Lord, come and deliver me from the darkness of Hell!"

Could the long legends covering so many of these jasper tablets be interpreted, most probably their purport would be found of the same nature with the just-cited Heracleonitan passport for the Pleroma: it were but a natural precaution on his friends' part to supply the deceased brother with a correct copy of such long-winded involved professions of faith, and which otherwise would be extremely apt to escape his memory; the more especially as being only confided to him by his spiritual guides when he was already at the last gasp.

Of the practice itself, the origin undoubtedly lay in the very ancient Egyptian rule of placing in the mummy cases those

elaborate "Litanies of the Dead" of which so many have come down to our times:* papyrus scrolls containing the prayers to be addressed by the soul to each god whose "gate" it has to traverse on its way to final rest. To prevent mistakes, the portrait of each deity is prefixed to the column of prayers due to him, and this same arrangement is found in the leaden scrolls belonging to the heterogeneous doctrine of the Gnostics.

The same custom yet holds its ground in India, probably its pristine source. Tavernier notices that the Brahmins placed on the breast of the corpse seven pieces of paper, inscribed with the prayers to be uttered by the soul as soon as released from its corporeal envelope by the flames of the funeral pile.†

The gem-talismans that remain in such varied abundance are themselves recognised in the few surviving writings of the Gnostic teachers. The *Pistis-Sophia* is full of allusions to the *Seals* and *Numbers* of the different Æons and the other Powers,‡ and with the repeated promise of the Saviour to reveal these all unto his hearers; a promise which, unfortunately, is not fulfilled in the book as it has come down to us. Nevertheless the very allusion sufficiently declares the sense in which we are to understand the ΣΦΡΑΓΙΣ so frequently to be seen on the talismans. The motive for providing the defunct believer

* "Papyri, it is well known, were frequently kept in readiness, with blank spaces for the names and occupation of the deceased: the papyrus in fact formed part of the regular funeral appliances. They were of three classes, namely *Ritual, Books of Transmigrations, and Solar Litanies*, or descriptions of the passage of the soul through the earth in the solar boat. These highly curious MSS. contain minute descriptions of all the regions through which the soul was supposed to pass after death."—C. W. Goodwin. A MS. of this kind, written in the fourth century before our era, was found by the Prince of Wales when excavating in Egypt; and has been published with facsimile. But the finest example known is the one preserved in the Soane Museum, hitherto unpublished.

† The Lord Taraka, if duly propitiated, will breathe into the dying man's ear a *mantra* or charm of such power as will secure him a safe passage to heaven.

‡ "Then they bring the soul before the *Virgin of Light*, and it showeth unto the Virgin her own *seal*, her own form of defence, &c." This very illustrative portion of the teaching of Valentinus is found in the Pistis-Sophia.

with a good supply of these imperishable credentials is sufficiently explained by the "Scheme of the Ophites" (published by Origen), which details the prayers to be addressed to the Seven Planetary Powers by the released soul, in its upward flight.

The prayer to Ildabaoth contains this indication: "O principal Spirit of the Pure Intelligence, Perfect Work in the eyes of the Father and of the Son, in presenting unto thee in this *seal* the sign of Life open the gates closed by thy power unto the world, and freely traverse thy domain."

Again, in saluting Iao (here taken from the Lunar Genius): "Thou that presidest over the Mysteries of the Father and of the Son, who shinest in the night-time, holding the second rank, the first Lord of Death! in presenting thee with this thine own *symbol* swiftly pass through thy dominions."

To Sabaoth: "Receive me, on beholding this pure symbol against which thy Genius cannot prevail; it is made after the *image* of the type; it is the body delivered by the Pentad."

To Orai (Venus): "Let me pass, for thou seest the symbol of thy power annihilated by the sign of the Tree of Life." (Is this *sign* the Cross, as Matter supposes, or the actual tree occasionally to be found on Gnostic gems?) And it must be remembered that the primary meaning of *symbolum* is the impression of a signet, which makes it more probable that such is the sense in which the word is used in all these passages. It may further be conjectured that in this conversion of the *symbolum* into a passport to heaven originated the theological use of the word to signify a creed or summary of the articles of Faith.

This same service of talismans in the next world is clearly recognised in the Pistis-Sophia (§ 293), where Mary Magdalene gives this curious version of the business of the tribute-penny: "Thou hast said that the soul giveth an account of itself, and likewise a *seal* unto all the Rulers that be in the regions of King Adamas, and giveth the account the honour and the glory of all the *seals* belonging unto them, and also the hymns of the kingdom of Light. This therefore is the word which thou spakest when the *stater* was brought unto thee, and thou sawest that it

was of silver and likewise of copper.* Thereupon thou didst ask, Whose is this image? and they answered, Of the King. Then when thou sawest that it was of silver and also of copper, thou saidest: Give the part which is the King's unto the King, and the part which is God's unto God. The which meaneth this: After that the soul hath received the Mystery it giveth an account of itself unto all the Rulers and unto the dominion of King Adamas, and also giveth the glory unto those that pertain to the Light. And thy saying that it shone, when thou sawest it, of silver and copper, it is the image and likeness of the soul. The power of the Light which is therein, the same is the fine silver: but the *Counterfeit of the Spirit* (Conscience) is the *material* copper."

The grand doctrine of Gnosticism was this: The soul on being released from the body (its prison-house and place of torment) has to pass through the regions of the Seven Powers; which it cannot do unless impregnated beforehand with *knowledge:* otherwise it is seized upon and swallowed by the dragon-formed Ruler of this world, Satan Ophiomorphos, and voided forth through his tail upon earth again, where it animates a swine or some such beast, and repeats its career once more. But should it be filled with *knowledge*, it eludes the Seven Powers, and tramples upon the head of Sabaoth ("of whom they say he hath the hair of a woman") and mounts up unto the eighth heaven, the abode of Barbelo, the Universal Mother, and who according to the Pistis-Sophia is the celestial Mother of the Saviour. Epiphanius quotes from the Gospel of Philip another formula, intended to extort a free passage from the same Planetary Genii: "The Lord hath revealed unto me what words the soul must use as it ascendeth up into heaven, and how it must make answer unto each one of the Celestial Virtues. 'I have known myself, I have *collected* myself from all parts, neither have I begotten sons unto the Ruler of this world, but I have plucked up the roots, and gathered together the scattered members. I know thee who thou art, for I am

* A curious remark, pointing clearly to Alexandria as the place where this Gospel was written, its tetradrachm of imperial times being very base silver indeed.

one from above.' But if convicted of having left any offspring upon earth, the soul is detained there until it shall have collected all and attracted these into itself."

This "Self-Collection" was only to be effected through the observance of perpetual chastity, or rather (inevitable compromise) the practice of the various unnatural vices that regularly spring from such an article of faith. If however a woman of the congregation should through want of precaution allow herself to become pregnant, the Elders produced abortion, took the fœtus and pounded it up in a mortar along with honey, pepper, and other spices and perfumery. Then this "congregation of swine and dogs" assembled; and every one dipping his finger into the mess, tasted thereof. This they called their Perfect Passover, saying: "We have not been deceived by the Ruler of concupiscence, but have gathered up again the backsliding of our brother." The very plain-spoken Epiphanius gives exact particulars, not to be put into a modern tongue, of the mode in which the faithful observed in one sense their vow of perpetual chastity, without renouncing the joys of Venus. This he illustrates by the singular explanation then current of the ancient myth of Saturn's devouring his own offspring, against which interpretation and the practice thereon founded, even Clemens had found it needful to warn the orthodox two centuries before.

To exemplify the punishment ordained for having done the work of the Demiurgus by leaving offspring upon earth, the Ophites told a wild legend how that Elias himself was turned back from the gates of heaven, although to his own conscience a pure virgin, because a female demon had gathered up of his seed during his sleep, and formed infants therewith, which to his unutterable confusion she then and there produced in testimony of his sin. Hence springs the mediæval notion of the *Succubæ*, nocturnal temptresses of the continent; although these were supposed to do the work of their father the Devil in a different way, by procuring him the needful supplies for his amours with the witches, to whom he stood in the ex-officio relation of paramour.

All this is in strict accordance with what is found in the

fragments of the "Gospel to the Egyptians"; for Clemens (Stromata iii.) quotes therefrom this dictum of the Saviour's: "When Salome asked the Lord how long shall Death prevail? He answered unto her, So long as ye women do bring forth children. Wherefore she said, Then I have done well in not bearing children, seeing that there is no necessity for generation. To which the Lord answered, Feed upon every herb, but that which hath bitterness, eat thou not. Again when Salome asked when the things should be known concerning which she inquired, the Lord answered, When ye shall not need a covering for your nakedness; when the two shall become one, the male with the female, neither male nor female." It is to these overstrained rules of morality that St. Paul alludes when he expostulates with the Colossians (ii. 20) asking them, "Why are ye subject to ordinances (or rather, make laws for yourselves without any warrant), namely, touch not (women), taste not (flesh), handle not (things unclean)."

From the consideration of the value and use of these Gnostic Symbols in the world to come, we are naturally led to inquire in what manner they were employed by their owners in *this*. The meaning of the word itself has gone through many transitions. "Symbolism" properly signified the contribution of each member towards the expenses of a Greek drinking-party. For this purpose each pledged his signet-ring to the caterer and afterwards redeemed it by paying his quota of the bill. For this reason Plautus transfers the name of symbolum to the ring itself. The signet being considered the most trustworthy of all credentials, the word came to signify any token serving for the purpose of a credential. For example, Caylus figures (Rec. V. pl. 55), a bronze right-hand, the natural size, inscribed on the palm ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΟΥΕΛΑΥΝΙΟΥΣ, "Credentials to the Velaunii" (a Gallic tribe whose seat was round Antibes).* The wrist at the section is closed, forming a base,

* The best, as well as the most interesting example of a symbolism extant, is the one figured by Caylus, without any conception of its value (Pl. 87, i.). It is an ivory disk, two inches in diameter, engraved with two fishes, placed side by side, with a palm-branch between them; the reverse is inscribed ΑΔΕΛΦΟΥ. The well known emblems show this

so that the hand could stand upright of itself. A pair of clasped hands, symbol of faith (still called in Italy *fede*), was the common present from one nation or army to another on making alliance: "Miserat civitas Lingonum veteri instituto dono legionibus *dextras* hospitii insigne" (Tac. Hist. i. 54). From the nature of the case such presents must have been made in the precious metals, and consequently none have been preserved. This connexion of ideas shows plainly why in ecclesiastical language symbolum stands for a profession of *faith*, a creed, i.e. gr. "Symbolum Apostolicum." And so by degrees the word degenerated into its present sense of any *token* denoting an idea, more especially a religious one.

Emblem again has passed through equal vicissitudes. At first, a little silver chasing, intended for letting into plate as an embellishment of the surface—which the term ἔμβλημα neatly expresses—the designs being always mythological, its name remained, after the fashion had expired, to denote any representation of that nature. There is, however, a distinction in the real meaning of *emblem* and symbol; the former expressing by actual representation, the latter by hieroglyphs, the idea they convey. Thus the *emblem* of Victory is a winged female holding a palm; the *symbol* of Victory is the palm by itself.

The Bambino—the favourite idol of the women of Rome—bears, in its type and decoration, the most convincing of all testimony as to the real source of the religion in whose pantheon it plays so prominent a part. It is a wooden figure, about two feet high, now passing for the *vera effigies* of the Infant Jesus; but to any eye acquainted with Indian art, an unmistakable copy of the Infant Buddha. The figure, in almost full relief, stands in front face, with arms crossed on the breast, and holding the lotus flower in the one hand, in the regular attitude of the Hindoo god. But the most striking feature in the design is the shape of the background, which has no prototype in Roman art, but is cut into the so-called "pine-

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ticket to have been the pass of some "Brother in Christ Jesus," in the primitive ages of the Church, serving as his introduction to the faithful in whatever part he might require their help.

apple" outline, which invariably accompanies the sacred images of India. On the head is a crown, in the Oriental style, and the close-fitting garment, reaching from neck to ankle, and now passing for the swaddling-clothes of the baby, is profusely studded with precious stones—the offerings of a later time. The very tradition as to its place of manufacture supplies an inkling of the truth; for it is said to be the work of a monk at Jerusalem, and carved out of one of the sacred olive-trees. The pious artist must have been inspired by the sight of the Indian prototype, for the resemblance is far too close to be accidental, if indeed, the whole affair be not another instance of a "christened Jove."

The very nature of things renders it a necessity for the members of every secret society to possess means for mutual recognition that shall escape the observation of the outer world. The partakers of the Eleusinian Mysteries, appear, from certain allusions in the classics, to have been furnished by their sponsors with something of the kind. The refusal to wear a garland at a feast was accepted as the sign of a Mithraic brother. Certain it is that our popular notion about the "Masonic Grip" was equally current as applied to the Gnostics in the times of Epiphanius. "On the arrival of any stranger belonging to the same sect, they have a *sign* given by the man to the woman, and *vice versa*. In holding out the hand under pretence of saluting each other, they feel and tickle it in a particular manner, underneath the palm, and by that means discover whether the new-comer belongs to the same society. Upon this, however poor they may be, they serve up to him a sumptuous feast, with abundance of meats and wine. And after they are well filled the host rises, leaving his wife behind, bidding her, 'Show thy charity unto this our brother,'" &c., carrying out his hospitality to an extent that in our selfish times no one can expect to meet with unless amongst the Esquimaux.

As may well be supposed, these *symbola* are widely diffused; for Gnosticism was more than co-extensive with the empire of Rome, and long survived her fall. Besides our guns, plates of bronze and lead (and even of gold in the remarkable example

found near Carnarvon), and rude copper medallions, engraved with similar devices, are constantly disinterred from ancient cemeteries, where they had so long protected the repose of their original possessors. Of that rarer class, the medallions, the most interesting known to me, was found in Provence (Praun Cabinet). It shows in *intaglio* the Abraxas god, for reverse, the triple Hecate, executed with considerable spirit: types well illustrating the syncretistic nature of the creed by this union of an ancient and a newly-devised type. The sepulchre of Maria, wife of the most orthodox Honorius, contained, amongst a variety of amuletic figures (or perhaps toys—little animals, mice, &c.), carved in crystal and agate, a gold plate, inscribed with the names of the "Angels of the Presence." On account of the great interest of this discovery, I have inserted a complete translation of Fauno's account, the only description ever penned of the rifling of an imperial tomb. And when Bishop Seffred's coffin (deceased 1159) was opened in Chichester Cathedral, upon his bony finger still lay the episcopal ring, set with an Abraxas jasper, no doubt recommended to him in life and death by the numerous virtues so particularly set forth by Camillus Leonardi. When did the belief in the virtue of these talismans really expire? The Young Pretender, with the superstition inherent in his family, had sought to enlist in his service the mighty Abraxas himself for his ill-starred expedition. In his baggage, captured at Culloden by General Belfort, was found a bloodstone, set in silver as a pendant, engraved with the well-known Pantheus. and for reverse the naked Venus, *Achamoth*, legend ATITA (Figured by Walsh, pl. 7).

Provence is yet a fruitful source of these interesting memorials of the wide-spread theosophy. Gnosticism from the beginning took root and flourished in Southern Gaul, as the elaborate treatise of Irenæus attacking it, as no newly-invented thing, very clearly demonstrates. Its success was probably due to the close affinity of its leading doctrines to the Mithraic and original Druidical systems previously reigning there. Later still, in the middle of the fourth century, a new form of Gnosticism, broached by Pirisellian, Bishop of Avila, who was put to death for his

pains by the British emperor Magnus Maximus. Gibbon's note upon the unlucky heresiarch is so characteristic of his style that I cannot forbear quoting it: "The bishopric of Avila (in Old Castile) is now worth 20,000 ducats a year, and is therefore much less likely to produce the author of a new heresy." That Spain also had, long before Priscillian's preaching, received and warmly embraced that of Basilides, although so far removed from its fountain-head, is apparent from a passage in Jerome's 29th letter to Theodora: "Our friend Licinius, when that most foul heresy of Basilides was raging throughout Spain, and like a pestilence and murrain was devastating all the province between the Pyrenees and the Ocean, held fast the purity of the Christian faith, far from receiving Amargel, Barbelo, Abraxas, Balsamus, the ridiculous Leusiboras, and the other such-like monstrosities."

That Britain had to some extent received the same doctrines, the Carnarvon gold plaque is sufficient evidence. And its existence throws light upon the singular fact mentioned by Matthew Paris, that when Eadred, in collecting building materials for his conventual church, was pulling up the Roman foundations of Verulamium, he came upon a little cupboard, "armariolum," in the thickness of an immense wall containing scrolls in an unknown tongue. At last a very aged monk, Unwona by name, made them out to be written in the ancient British language, and containing invocations to the gods formerly worshipped in the place. But Verulamium was so entirely Roman, as far as its public edifices were concerned, that the use of the native language in any documents accompanying the foundation of a temple is in the highest degree improbable; the regular Gnostic Greek would be equally puzzling to the old Saxon monk, and his explanation was a safe cloak for his ignorance. The late period of the Roman occupation, when Gnosticism most flourished, will account for the preservation of "scrolls" (parchment no doubt) through the few centuries intervening before the abbotship of Eadred.

It is more than probable that such doctrines lurked unnoticed amongst the native Gallo-Romans, during the times of the Arian Gothic kings, and did no more than revive into the

flourishing Manicheism of the Albigenses in the twelfth century. The fact of these sectaries having received the same share of persecution from Catholics as the Waldenses themselves is not alone sufficient to prove them equally good Protestants with the latter; though *that* is now taken for granted, especially by expounders of the Apocalypse, when hard put to it to find the required "Two Witnesses" against the Scarlet Lady.

Gnosticism has left traces of itself, whether by direct or indirect descent amongst those mysterious sects of the Libanus, the Druses and Anseyrets. As late as Justinian's reign, according to Procopius, no fewer than a million Polytheists, Manicheans and *Samaritans* (the last also a sect of Gnostics)* were exterminated in Syria alone, during the systematic persecution, so long carried on by this pedantic bigot. As that region soon afterwards fell under the more tolerant Caliphs, who never troubled themselves about the religion of their subjects, provided their tribute were punctually paid, these doctrines may very well have come down in some sort to our days, considering the secluded position of the people holding them, and the tenacity of life possessed by every well-defined system of religious ideas.

* And the most ancient of all, for they claimed Simon Magus for their founder.

Fig. 15.

GNOSTIC THEOGONY.

The several grades in the Gnostic Theogony, through all of which the soul had to pass before it could attain to supreme perfection, are briefly set before us in this passage of the Pistis Sophia (247):—

"And when the Saviour had said all these things unto His disciples, Andrew came forward and spoke: 'Lord, be not wroth with me, but have compassion upon me and reveal the mystery of the word which I will ask Thee, otherwise it is a hard thing in my sight and I understand it not.' Then the Saviour answered and said unto him: 'Inquire what thou wouldst inquire and I will declare the same unto thee, face to face, and without a parable.' Then Andrew answered and said: 'Lord, I wonder and marvel greatly how men that be in this world, when they are departed from out of this body of *Matter*, and have gone out of the world, how shall they pass through these firmanents, and all these rulers, and lords, and gods, and all these Great Invisible Ones, and all these that belong to the Middle-space, and those that belong to the place of them upon the right hand, and all the great emanations of the same, so that they may come within (beyond) them all, so that they may inherit the kingdom of Light? This business, therefore, Lord, is full of trouble in my sight.' When Andrew had thus spoken, the spirit of the Saviour was moved within Him, and he cried out and said: 'How long shall I bear with you, how long shall I suffer you! Do you then not understand at all, and are ye still ignorant? Know ye not and do ye not understand that ye are all angels, and archangels, and rulers, and lords, and gods, and the other Powers, and the glory thereof; you *from* yourselves and *in* yourselves in turn, proceeding out of one mass, and one matter, and one being, and all proceeding out of one *confusion*.*

* Κερασμὸς, i.e. the mixture of the Light Divine with brute Matter, which it was the object of the Saviour's coming to rectify.

And by the commandment of the First Mystery this confusion must needs be, until the great emanations of Light and the glory of the same shall have cleansed it; and they shall cleanse it not of themselves, but through the compulsion of the Great Ineffable One. And they have not received torments, neither have they changed their places at all, neither have they despoiled themselves, nor transformed themselves into various figures, neither have they been in the last affliction. For this cause chiefly ye are the dregs of the Treasury-house, and ye are the dregs of them that pertain to the right hand, and ye are the dregs of the great Invisible Ones, and of all the Rulers, and in a word ye are the dregs of them all. And ye were in great sorrows, and afflictions, and transformations, and in sundry shapes of this world; and by reason of these sorrows, ye were in agony and fought with this world and all the Matter that is therein, and ye did not slacken your hands in fighting against it until ye had found out the mysteries of the kingdom of Light, which rendered you, who fought, a pure Light, and ye were made the pure Light.'"

All which implies the grand idea that Man, although made of inferior, though cognate stuff, to the Angelic Powers, is susceptible, through the attainment of *knowledge*, of a perfection superior to theirs.

THE SCHEME OF THE OPHITES.

Gnostic symbols, with their uses in this life and in that to come have thus far been the subject of our investigation; which naturally leads us to consider the ideas that their devisers entertained of the constitution of the next world and of the nature of the soul itself. As to the former of these deeply interesting questions, the Gnosis specially laboured to afford the exactest information to its disciples; and in this class the one preserved by Origen (in Celsum vi.), leaves nothing to be desired in point of fulness, and may confidently be accepted as the most authoritative of all such celestial *cartes de route*.

This learned Father had, by some means or other, become possessed of a parchment chart on which were depicted the successive stages of the soul's heavenward journey, with the several *Powers* * it must encounter in its flight, and the proper invocations (specimens of which I have already given) whereby it should extort permission to traverse their dominions. This chart was known to the faithful as the "Schema, or Diagramma, of the Ophites." Amongst these invocations the one addressed to Iao, genius of the moon, is peculiarly important as illustrating the use of the most numerous class of the talismans we are considering. "O thou that presidest over the mysteries of the Father and of the Son, Iao who shinest in the night, who holdest the second place, the First Lord of Death, who makest part of that which is without God! In presenting to thee thine own *memorial* (or likeness) as a token (or passport) I swiftly traverse thy domain after having conquered through the Word of Life that which was born of Thee." The MSS. read *τὸν ἰδίον ὑπὸ νοῦν σύμβολον*, which has no meaning, but can only be the corruption of *τὴν ἰδίαν ὑπονοῖαν*, a word often used by Plutarch in the sense of symbol. Now what else could this "memorial" of Iao be but his own image engraved in gems? This deity is styled "Lord of Death," because the moon (Isis) presides over the birth, development and change, of which death is the necessary consequence, of things terrestrial.

* This was merely an adaptation to the new notions of the sect of the old Egyptian ritual always placed, entire or in part, within the mummy-case, and entitled, "The Book of the Gates, concerning the manifestation unto the Light." These *Gates*, leading to the palace of Osiris, were one-and-twenty in number, and were guarded each by its particular deity, to be duly addressed in his turn. The papyrus of Petamenoph, otherwise Ammonius (d. under Hadrian), has been admirably explained and translated by Champollion, and published in Caillaud's 'Voyage a Meroé,' iv. p. 22. Or the belief may have had a Chaldæan origin, even more ancient than the Egyptian. Lane-Fox and others have translated a tablet giving an account of the descent of the goddess Ishtar into Hades, "the Land of no Return." The Lord of Earth gives her a green bough of the If tree, and she passes successively through the Seven Gates, surrendering at each in order, her crown, ear-rings, head-jewels, frontlets, finger and toe-rings, and necklace. The Lord of Hades gives her a cup of the Water of Life, and she returns, receiving back her jewels in the same order in which she gave them up.

Of the theory therein embodied, much was evidently derived from the same source as the Neo-Platonic doctrine concerning the *planetary* origin of the soul's faculties, which shall be related further on. The chart itself was founded on that essential doctrine of Gnosticism, that the soul, released from the body, mounted upwards, eager for absorption into the Infinite Godhead, or "Boundless Light," that *summum bonum* of Oriental aspiration (the Buddist Nirwana "perfect Repose, the Epicurean *Indolentia*"); but on its way was obliged to traverse the successive regions of the planets, each ruled by its presiding genius. These genii were of a nature somewhat *material*, and therefore malignant, and in this respect corresponding to the Seven Devs, Ahriman's ministers, who according to Zoroaster are chained each to his own planet. To obtain the indispensable permission of transit, a different adjuration to each Power was required; all which have been already given from Origen's copy of the Chart. Their *names* were put down therein, as Adonai, genius of the Sun, Iao of the Moon, Eloi of Jupiter. Sabao of Mars, Orai of Venus, Astaphai of Mercury, and Ildabaoth of Saturn.*

All these names are to be read, more or less commonly, upon our talismans, although probably used there in a different sense from that accepted by the author of the Diagramma. The Jewish angels Michael, Gabriel, Surid, Raphael, Thantabaoth, and Erataoth, were likewise inscribed as names of the genii presiding over the constellations, the Bear, Serpent, Eagle, Lion, Dog, Bull. These notions are manifestly of Magian root, acquired by the Jews during the long period that their country was a province of the Persian Empire, and had grown into an essential article of religion.

St. Paul found it needful to warn his flock against the "worshipping of Angels;" nevertheless, the adoration and the multiplication of their names went on augmenting to that pitch, that a Council held under Pope Zachary reduced them, as objects of worship to three only, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael.

* The Ritual above cited contains regularly *eight* invocations addressed to Thoth, recommending the soul of the defunct to the guardians of the same number of regions over whom he is the president.

This retrenchment of the heavenly host was endorsed by a capitulary of Charlemagne's issued from Aix-la-Chapelle. In the Diagram under consideration, Michael was typified by a lion, Suriel by an ox, Raphael by a serpent, Gabriel by an eagle, Thantabaoth by a bear, Onioth or Zartaoth by an ass.

The reward promised to the Angel of the Church at Thyatira (Rev. ii. 28), "And I will give him the Morning Star," seems to be connected with the same belief in the Planetary Presidents. Dante, in his Paradiso, going doubtless upon old tradition, makes Mercury the abode of spirits moved to glorious deeds in life by the love of fame; Venus, of true lovers; Luna, of theologians; Mars, of martyrs for the Faith; Jupiter of good princes; Saturn of such as have led a contemplative and recluse life.

The above-quoted names of the Planetary Genii were in the Jewish religion either titles and attributes of the Most High, or else of his chief ministering spirits; but in the Gnostic *Scheme* they had been degraded from their high estate, and reduced into secondary deities of a mixed nature, partaking of good as well as of evil, yet all equally anxious to win souls from Abraxas, the proper lord and creator of the universe. The only explanation for such a misapplication of the sacred titles is a very brief one; these semi-Buddhist philosophers who found the root of all evil in Matter, and consequently in the *material* creation, employed these old hallowed names to denote the agents of the Creator, who on account of this their office were regarded as mere demons; and by an exactly similar process they are found misappropriating the most sacred names of the Christian revelation. But of this blasphemous perversion and wanton desecration of the ancient terminology no trace is to be discovered upon our talismans, their makers belonging to the Kabbalistic School of Alexandria, which reconciling Moses with Zoroaster, continued to employ these appellations in their primary time-honoured sense.

The source of this notion concerning the Planetary Rulers can be traced very far back. The power of Ildabaoth, or Saturn, and his sons over the soul, as well as the astrological notion about the influence of the stars over man's destiny, are

clearly part and parcel of what the Alexandrian Platonists had taught concerning the planetary origin of the soul and its faculties, thus expounded by Macrobius (Som. Scip. i. 12): "The soul on its descent from the One and Indivisible source of its being in order to be united to the body, passes through the Milky Way into the Zodiac at their intersection in Cancer and Capricorn, called the Gates of the Sun, because the two solstices are placed in these signs. Through Cancer, the 'Gate of Man,' the soul descends upon Earth, the which is *spiritual death.* Through Capricorn, the 'Gate of the Gods,' it reascends up into heaven; its new birth taking place upon its release from the body. So soon as the soul has left Cancer and the Milky Way, it begins to lose its divine nature, and arriving at Leo enters upon the first phase of its future condition here below. During its downward progress, the soul, at first a *sphere* in form, is elongated into a *cone*, and now begins to feel the influence of Matter, so that on joining the body it is intoxicated and stupefied by the novel draught. This condition is typified by the Crater of Bacchus placed in the heavens between Cancer and Leo.

"The soul thus descending, as it passes through each sphere receives successive *coatings*, as it were, of a luminous body, and is furnished at the same time with the several faculties it has to exercise during its probation upon Earth. Accordingly, in Saturn, it is supplied with reason and intelligence; in Jupiter, with the power of action; in Mars, with the irascible principle; in the Sun, with sensation and speculation; in Venus, with the appetites; in Mercury, with the means of declaring and expressing thoughts; in the Moon, with the faculty of generating and augmenting the body." Hence, as the Planets contain all the elements that, so to speak, make up the Inner Man, the genii, their rulers ("Lords of Death," as Valentinus calls them), exercise their tyranny over the soul through the medium of these faculties, so long as the soul is *encrusted* with their contributions during its imprisonment in the body.

It is curious to compare with this Grecian theory the "Doctrine of the Servants of Saturn," dwellers in the farthest North (unmistakably a fragment of Druidical lore), preserved to

us by Plutarch in his treatise 'On the Face in the Moon.' They taught that in the generation of man, the Earth supplied the *body*, the Moon the ψυχή, the Sun the νοῦς. What the ψυχή is to the body, the same is the νοῦς to the ψυχή. This composite nature undergoes a double death. In the first, Demeter, whose companion is the Earthly, or Supernal, Hermes, forcibly separates the ψυχή (animal soul) from the body. This soul, after a certain penance in the Middle Sphere, in order to purify it from the pollution of the flesh, is caught up into the Moon, and passes through the Earth's shadow during an eclipse, after a probation proportionate in length of time unto its deserts; whereas, the wicked, if they try to enter before their purification be completed, are scared away by the terrific *Face*. The good abide in the Moon, in the enjoyment of perfect tranquillity, and becoming δαίμονες or *genii*, busy themselves with the regulation of human affairs upon earth, rendering oracles and similar services to mankind. But should these beatified spirits misconduct themselves, they are put again into a human body, and sent down to Earth. (This is the very doctrine of Manes, who made the light of the Moon to depend upon the brightness of the blessed one therein resident; a theory which Epiphanius triumphantly overthrows by asking how the luminary was supplied during the eight centuries that elapsed between the Creation and the death of Adam?)

But after a certain time, the νοῦς aspires to reascend to its fountain head the Sun, whereupon Persephone, with her colleague the Celestial Hermes, separates it with gentleness and by slow degrees from the grosser ψυχή. This is the Second Death: the νοῦς flying up to the Sun, but the ψυχή remaining in the Moon in a dreamy sort of existence, until gradually absorbed into her substance, exactly as the Earth gradually absorbs into herself the remains of the body. Calm and philosophic souls are easily absorbed; but active, passionate, erotic natures with great difficulty; they wander about in midspace, divested of the νοῦς, becoming *Tityi* and *Typhones*;* throwing confusion

* Names of the chief giants who warred against Jupiter. The legend clearly comes from the same source as that in the Book of Enoch: "And the Giants who were born of the spirit and of flesh shall be called

into oracles, as the so-called Typhon does at Delphi, until in the end they likewise are drawn back and attracted into the substance of the Moon.

Justinus Kerner, in his treatise 'Die Seherin von Prevorst,' improving upon the old notion, most ingeniously anatomises the Inner Man, and makes him to consist of three members, *Seele*, *Nerven-Geist*, *Geist*. The Nerven-Geist, or nervous energy, being of a grosser nature, continues united with the Seele after its separation from the body, rendering it capable of becoming *visible* to the living in the form of an apparition, and enabling it in other ways to affect material objects, to make noises, move about articles of furniture, in short, to commit the various annoyances comprehended under the term "es spukt." And here be it observed the commonness of such visitations in Germany is amusingly exemplified by the necessity of having an impersonal verb to express them; just as we say "it rains," "it blows," so do the more sensitive Germans say "it ghosts." According to its previous training in life, this composite being requires more or less time to dissolve, the Seele alone being immortal; and consequently the Teutonic spectres assume a more and more diminutive form as their time of probation wears away. Analogous to this is Plato's explanation of the *acknowledged facts* of spirits haunting tombs: having been immersed during her union with the body in gross sensual pleasures, the soul becomes equally unable and unwilling to abandon her old companion and dwelling-house before the same be totally consumed.

To the above-quoted theories explaining the nature of the soul, and its final destination, the recent discovery of that precious monument of Gnosticism, the Pistis-Sophia enables us to add a third, infinitely more complete in all its details. This last

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evil spirits upon earth; and on earth shall be their habitation. Evil spirits shall proceed from their flesh because they were created from above; from the holy watchers was their beginning and primary foundation. Evil spirits shall they be upon earth, and the spirits of the wicked shall they be called. The habitation of the spirits of heaven shall be in heaven, but upon earth shall be the habitation of terrestrial spirits who are born on earth. The spirits of the giants shall be like clouds which shall oppress, corrupt, fall, contend, and bruise upon earth."—(xv. 8.)

revelation improves upon the Neo-Platonic doctrine by making the astral genii "the Rulers of the Sphere" (Zodiac) *create* the soul from their own substance "out of the tears of their eyes and the sweat of their torment," animated with a spark of that Divine Light which has not yet been totally extracted from their fuller nature. For these Zodiacal Lords evidently answer to the rebellious Angels of the Jews, and the Seven Devs of the Magi, in fact the whole treatise represents the religious ideas of the latter, more closely than of any other system.

THE CAUSE OF SIN.

(Pist.-Soph. 282). "And when the Saviour had spoken these things, he continuing in his discourse said unto Mary: Now, therefore Mary, hear concerning the thing whereof thou askest of me, Who is it that constraineth man to commit sin?" Now therefore when (the parents) have begotten the child, when there exists in him a small *power*, and a small soul, and a small "counterfeit of the spirit" (conscience);* in a word, all the three in him being small together. No one of them understandeth anything at all, whether it be good or evil, by reason of the weight of the heavy oblivion (of the former life) that holdeth them; the body likewise being small. And the child eateth of the meats of the world of the Rulers. And the soul gathereth to itself out of the portion of the soul that is concealed in these meats, and the Counterfeit of the spirit gathereth to itself out of the portion of evil that resideth in the meats and in the lusts thereof; the body, likewise, gathereth the insensible *Matter* that is in the meats. But the *Fate* herself taketh not out of the meats, inasmuch as she is not mixed up with them, but in what shape she came into the world, in the same she continueth. And little by little, the power, the soul, and the counterpart of the spirit grow to their full stature, and each one thereof is sensible after its own kind.† The power is sensible to seek after the Light above; the soul is sensible to seek after the place of Righteousness of the mixture, which same is the place of

* Ἀντίμιμον πνεύματος. † I.e. adapted by its constitution.

confusion; the counterfeit of the spirit also seeketh after all wickedness and lusts and sins; and the body is sensible to nothing save how it may draw strength out of Matter, thus the three are forthwith sensible, each one according to its own nature, and the contentious ones (ἐριδαῖοι) also send ministers who shall follow them in order to bear witness against all the sins that they may commit, to regulate the manner in which they shall punish them when they come up for judgment, the counterfeit of the spirit also thinks upon and is sensible to all the sins and the evils that come near to that soul, which proceedeth from the Rulers of the Great Fate, and bringeth them into the soul.* But the inner power seeketh after the Place of Light, and all the godhead, whilst the counterfeit of the spirit turneth the soul awry, and constraineth it to work all its own unlawful deeds, and all its passions, and all its wickedness continually; and it abideth a different creature from the soul, and is an enemy to the soul, and causeth it to commit all these sins and wickednesses; and also stirreth up the ministers of contention, to bear witness against the sins that it is about to cause the soul to commit. And it cometh to pass that it resteth not day or night, and it troubleth the soul in dreams and in the lusts of this world, and maketh it to lust after all the things of this world; in a word, it urgeth the soul to do all the things that the Rulers have laid before it, and it is at war with the soul, contriving that it shall do the things it would not. Now therefore *this* is the enemy of the soul and constraineth it to do all kinds of sins; and when it comes to pass that the time of that man is accomplished, then cometh his Fate, which driveth that man unto the death appointed him by the Rulers, and by means of the bonds wherewith men are tied by Destiny. Then come the contentious Receivers to conduct that soul out of the body; and after that these Receivers go about with the soul through all the regions shewing unto it the Æons of the world,† whilst the counterfeit of the spirit and fate follow after that soul: but the *power*

* The Platonic "divinæ particula auræ"; the extrication of which from the *confusion*, μίγμα, was the real object of Christ's descent on earth, according to Valentinus.

† The sense seems to require the translation, "exhibit the *soul* unto the Æons."

that was in it goes up unto the Virgin of Light. And after those three days the Receivers lead that soul down from above into the hell of Chaos, they deliver it unto the tormentors (and the Receivers return again into their own places), who punish the same according to the measure of its sins as ordained by the Archons for the discharge of souls. And the counterfeit of the spirit becomes the guard over the soul, appointed over it, convicting it, in one place of punishment after the other, of the sins which it hath committed, and it leadeth the soul into the region of the Archons of the Middle-space. And when it hath arrived in their presence, they lead it unto the Mysteries of Fate, and if they find them not (sealed upon the soul), they seek after their own share; and those Archons punish the soul according to its sins, according to its deserts; of those punishments I will declare the form unto you in the 'Emanation of the Universe.' But after it has come to pass that the time of the soul's different punishments is accomplished in the prisons of the Archons of the Middle-space, then the counterfeit of the spirit leadeth the soul upwards out of all their regions, and bringeth it before the light of the Sun, according to the commandment of the *Primal Man** IEOY, and bringeth it before the judge, the Virgin of Light. And she trieth that soul; and in case she shall find it to be sinful, she planteth within the same (a particle of) the power of her own light, according unto its station in life, its body, and its share of sensibility. Then the Virgin of Light putteth her seal upon that soul and delivereth it unto one of her Receivers, who will see that it be placed in a body befitting the sins that it hath committed (in a former life). And verily I say unto you she shall not let the soul be released from the changes of its bodies (various metempsychoses), until it shall have accomplished its uttermost cycle in the shapes whereof it may be deserving; of all which I will tell you the form, and likewise the form of the several bodies into which they shall place the souls, according to the sins of each.

"But if it be a soul that hath not obeyed the counterfeit of the spirit in all its doings, but is righteous, and hath received the mysteries of Light that be in the First Court, or those that be in the

* The Seir Anpin of the Rabbis.

Second Court, or those in the Third which is the innermost part (*adytum*)—when the time of that soul in the body is accomplished, and when the counterfeit of the spirit followeth after that soul, together with fate, whilst the soul is on the road that leadeth on high, and before it is far distant therefrom, it uttereth the mystery for the breaking * of all the *seals* and all the bonds of the counterfeit of the spirit wherewith the Archons have bound it unto the soul. And it having uttered those words, the bonds of the counterfeit of the spirit are loosed so that it ceaseth to persecute that soul, and lets it go according to the commandment given unto it by the Archons of the Great Fate, who said unto it: Let not that soul go free, unless it shall utter unto thee the mystery for the breaking of the bonds wherewith we have bound thee unto it. Thereupon the soul, thus set free, leaves fate behind unto the Archons of the way of the Middle-space, and destroys the counterfeit of the spirit leaving it for the Archons in the place wherein they had bound it (at first) unto the soul; and in that moment it becometh a great flood of light, shining exceedingly; and the Receivers who had fetched it out of the body are afraid of that light, so that they fall down upon their faces, and the soul is made as it were *a wing* † *of light*, and passeth through all the regions of the Archons, and through all the courses of the Light, until it entereth into the place of its own kingdom for which it hath received the mystery.

"But if it be a soul that hath received the mystery in the First Court, which is the outer part, and after receiving and performing the mystery and being converted shall again have sinned, and when its time in the body is accomplished, and the Receivers come to fetch it, and the counterfeit of the spirit and fate pursue it by reason of the seals and bonds wherewith it hath been bound together with them by the Archons—then if the soul whilst yet in the way of its pursuers should utter the mystery that breaketh those seals and bonds, forthwith they are all loosed and the counterfeit of the spirit ceases to follow after the

* I.e. the formula, perhaps the "mystery of the seven vowels," so highly lauded elsewhere.

† I.e. a winged thing; referring perhaps to the ancient emblem of the human-headed bird used in the same sense.

soul. And the soul leaves its pursuers behind, for none of them have their own power, but the soul keeps its own power. Then the Receivers that belong to the mystery which the soul hath received come and snatch it away from the contentious Receivers, and these return to do the business of the Archons in the occupation of fetching away souls. But the Receivers of the soul, who pertain to the Light, themselves become a wing of light to that soul, and a vesture of light unto it. And they lead it not into Chaos, because it is not lawful to lead a soul, that hath obtained the mysteries, into Chaos; but they bring it into the road of the Archons of the Middle-space. And when they are come before the Archons of the Middle-space, the Archons depart out of the way of that soul, being in great fear, and in cruel burning, and in divers shapes, in a word being in great fear unto which there is no measure. And in that moment the soul utters the mystery of its defence before them; and they fall upon their faces out of fear of the mystery and of the defence which it hath uttered. And the soul leaves with them their *fate*,* saying unto them: Take to yourselves your fate, I am not coming into your place from henceforth, I am made a stranger unto you for ever, I am coming into the place of my own inheritance. And after the soul hath said this, the Receivers of the Light fly away with it on high, and bring it before the Æons of Destiny, giving it the proper speech of defence for the place and the *seals* thereof, and the soul shews to them the counterfeit of the spirit and utters the mystery that sundereth the bonds wherewith they had bound them both together, saying to them: Take to yourselves your counterfeit of the spirit, henceforth I come not in your place, I am made a stranger unto you for ever. And it shews them the *seal* of each and the form of defence. Then the Receivers fly away with the soul and bring it through all the Æons, shewing the seal, and the defence, in all the regions of King Adamas, and of all the Rulers of the places of the left hand (which defences and seals I will declare to you when I explain to you the emanation of the mystery). Then they bring the soul before the Virgin of Light, and it giveth to the Virgin her own seal, defence, and

* Viz., the separate portion of its composition implanted in it by these Archons at its birth.

the glory of hymns, and the Virgin of Light with the seven other Virgins examine that soul—all of them, that they may all find their own marks, their own seals, their own baptisms, and their own unctions upon it. (292) Then the Virgin of Light sealeth that soul, and the Receivers of Light baptize the same and give unto it the spiritual unction. And each of the Virgins of Light sealeth it with her own seal. Furthermore the Receivers deliver it over to the great Sabaoth, the Good One, who is hard by the gate of Life in the region of those pertaining unto the right hand, whom they call 'the Father'; and the soul rendereth unto him the glory of his hymns, of his seals, and of his justification. Then the great good Sabaoth sealeth it with his own seals, and the soul rendereth the knowledge, and the glory of hymns, and the seals belonging to the whole region of those that pertain unto the right hand. These also all seal it with their own seal; and Melchisedek, the great gatherer of Light—who is in the region of those pertaining to the right hand—also sealeth that soul. Then Melchisedek's gatherers also seal it and lead it into the Treasury of Light, and the soul rendereth glory and honour and their proper seals in all the regions of Light. Then those pertaining to all the regions of the Treasury of Light seal it with their own seals, and so it entereth into the place of its inheritance."

STATE AFTER DEATH OF THE UNINITIATED.

(261) "Then stood forth Mary and said, Lord, as concerning just men and perfect in all righteousness; such a man in whom there is no sin at all, shall they torment him with all these judgments and punishments, or shall they not? Or shall they carry such a man into the kingdom of heaven or not?

"The Saviour answered and said unto Mary, The just man perfect in all righteousness, that hath never committed sin, but yet hath never obtained any one mystery of Light, when his time cometh for departing out of the body, straightway there shall come for him the Gatherers belonging to that one of the great Triple Powers who is the greatest amongst them, in order that

they may take away that soul from the Contentious Gatherers, and during three days they shall go about with that soul amongst all the creatures of the world (i.e. throughout all creation). After the three days they shall lead him down into Chaos, so that they may deliver him out of * all the punishments therein, and out of the judgments, and they shall bring him unto all the judgment-places, but no flame of Chaos shall afflict him greatly; (262) nevertheless they shall in some wise afflict him for a little space, but speedily shall they have compassion upon him, and draw him up out of Chaos so as to take him out of the Road of the Middle-space, and from all the Rulers thereof. And these shall not punish him with their cruel torments, but the flame of their regions shall afflict him in some measure; and after they have brought him into the unmerciful place ΑΧΘΑΝΑΒΑΣ they shall not torment him with the cruel torments therein, but they shall keep him there a little while, and afflict him in some measure with the heat of the torments of that place. But they shall quickly have compassion upon him, and bring him forth out of all those places, neither shall they lead him by the way that goeth from out of the Æons, for fear lest the Rulers of the Æons should hold him too firmly, but they shall conduct him by the path of the Sun's light, in order to bring him before the Virgin of Light. And she doth try that soul that she may find it free from sin, and she ordereth it not to be carried unto the Light because the *mark of the Kingdom of Light* is not upon it; but she sealeth it with a special seal, and takes care that it be put into a body of righteousness belonging to the Æons. (263) This man will be good, so that he will obtain the seals of the mysteries of the Light, and inherit the kingdom for ever and ever.

"But if he shall have sinned once, twice, or thrice, they shall reject that soul, sending it back again into the world according to the *form of the sins that* it may have committed; the form whereof I will declare unto you hereafter. But verily, verily I say unto you, that even the righteous man that hath committed no sin at all cannot be brought into the Kingdom of Light, forasmuch the seal of the mysteries of that kingdom is not found

* Protect him against any suffering from.

upon him. Once for all, I say unto you, a soul cannot be brought into the kingdom, if it be without the mysteries of the Kingdom of Light."

FUTURE PUNISHMENTS.

The Gnostics did not fail, after the example of their orthodox rivals, to employ the strongest stimulants of terror in order to gain converts, as is forcibly manifested by this picture of the varied torments of the world to come, the appointed heritage of all who obtained not the Gnosis which they preached ('Pistis-Sophia,' 255):—

"And Jesus continuing in his discourse said unto the disciples, When I shall have returned into the Light, preach ye unto the whole world. Say unto them, Slacken not by day and night to seek until ye shall find the mysteries of the Kingdom of Light, that shall cleanse you, and render you a pure light, and shall bring you into the Kingdom of Light. Say unto them, Renounce the world and all the *Matter* which is therein, and all the cares and the sins thereof—in a word, all the conversation that therein is—that ye may be worthy of the mysteries of Light, that ye may be saved from all the punishments that are in the judgment-places. Say unto them, Renounce murmuring, that ye may be worthy of the mysteries of Light, that ye may be saved from the burning of the Figure of the *Dog*. Say unto them, Renounce obedience (to the world), that ye may be saved from the judgments of the Figure of the *Dog*. Say unto them, Renounce invocation (of idols), that ye may be worthy of the mysteries of Light, that ye may be saved from the torments of *Ariel*. Renounce a lying tongue, that ye may be saved from the burning rivers of the Figure of the Dog-shaped one. Renounce false witnessing, that ye may be set free, that ye may be saved from the same rivers. Renounce boastings and pride, that ye may be saved from the burning pits of Ariel. Renounce self-love, that ye may be saved from the judgments of *Orcus*.* Renounce talkativeness, that

* These regions and the shapes of their Rulers seem to have been suggested to our author by the Egyptian mummy-case paintings of the *Gates*

ye may be saved from the fires of Orcus. Renounce unjust judgments, that ye may be saved from the torments that be in Orcus. Renounce covetousness, that ye may be saved from the rivers of smoke of the Dog-shaped. Renounce the love of this world, that ye may be saved from the pitched-coats burning of the Dog-shaped. Renounce robbery, that ye may be saved from the rivers of deceit of Ariel. Renounce evil speaking, that ye may be saved from the torments of the river of smoke. Renounce wickedness, that ye may be saved from the burning seas of Ariel. Renounce unmercifulness, that ye may be saved from the judgments of the *Dragon-shapes.* Renounce anger, that ye may be saved from the rivers of smoke of the Dragon-shapes. Renounce reviling, that ye may be saved from the burning seas of the Dragon-shapes. Renounce robbery, that ye may be saved from the boiling seas of the same. Renounce thieving, that ye may be saved from *Ildabaoth.* Renounce backbiting, that ye may be saved from the burning rivers of the *Lion-shaped* one. Renounce fighting and quarrelling, that ye may be saved from the boiling rivers of Ildabaoth. Renounce stubbornness, that ye may be saved from the ministers of Ildabaoth and his burning seas. Renounce evil deeds, that ye may be saved from all the devils of Ildabaoth and from all his punishments. Renounce desperateness, that ye may be saved from the seas of boiling pitch of Ildabaoth. Renounce adultery, that ye may be saved from the seas of brimstone and pitch of the Lion-shaped. Renounce murders, that ye may be saved from the Ruler of crocodiles, which is the first creature in the ice that is in the Outer Darkness. Renounce cruelty and ungodliness, that ye may be saved from the Rulers of the Outer Darkness. Renounce impiety, that ye may be saved from weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Renounce witchcraft, that ye may be saved from the mighty frost and hail of the Outer Darkness. Renounce blasphemy, that ye may be saved from the great dragon of the Outer Darkness. Renounce

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in which are seated so many genii with heads of hawk, baboon, man, crocodile, lion, jackal, vulture, winnowing-fan, and serpent; all armed with swords. These were the Gates passage through which on his way to the judgment-seat Anubis is prayed to procure for the defunct in the papyrus-ritual buried with him.

false doctrines, that ye may be saved from all the torments of the great dragon of the Outer Darkness.

"Say unto them that teach false doctrines, and unto every one that is taught by them, Woe unto you; for, unless ye repent and leave your error, ye shall fall into the torments of the great dragon of the Outer Darkness, exceeding cruel, and they in the world shall not redeem you out of them for ever and ever, but ye shall be utterly destroyed unto the end. Say unto them that slight the doctrine of truth of the First Mystery, Woe unto you, for your punishment shall be evil beyond that of all men: ye shall abide in the great frost, ice, and hail in the middle of the dragon, and in the Outer Darkness, and they in this world shall not redeem you from this hour forth for ever, but ye shall be in that place; and in the dissolution of the universe ye shall be consumed, so that ye shall be destroyed for ever."

Fig. 16.

TALISMANIC LEADEN SCROLLS.

The only classical notice of the employment of these engines for moving the invisible world (not, however, for good, but for evil) is to be found in the Annals of Tacitus (ii. 69), who thus enumerates them amongst the means, real or imaginary, whereby Livia's agent, Piso, occasioned, or aggravated, the final illness of the too popular Germanicus. "The severity of the attack (a fever) was heightened by the suspicion of poison on the part of Piso: and in fact there were discovered, hidden in the house-walls, fragments of human corpses, spells and curses and the name of Germanicus engraved upon plates of lead; also ashes half-burnt and soaked in blood, and other pieces of witchcraft by means whereof it is believed that souls are made over unto the Infernal Gods." A very remarkable example of the practice of this malevolent superstition has been published by Visconti (Op. Var. iii. 256). It is a sheet of lead found, folded up, within a tomb opened at the Hippotade Gate of Athens; and a copy of which he had received from M. Fauvel. The inscription, full of blunders both in spelling and grammar, is arranged in ten lines, seemingly meant for trochaic tetrameters, and may be read thus:

1. Ἑρμὴς χθόνιος, Γῆ κατοχός.
2. καὶ πρὸς τὴν Φερσεφόνην.
3. Φερσεφόνη καταδῶ Δεξίαν.
4. πρὸς τούτους ἅπαντας.
5. καὶ Κλεοφραδὲς.
6. καταδῶ πρὸς τοὺς αὔτους ἴοσι.
7. καὶ Ναυβάτην καταδῶ πρὸς τοὺς αὔτους.
8. Τληπόλεμον καταδῶ.
9. καὶ τοὺς μετὰ Κτησίου ἅπαντας.
10. καταδῶ.*

"Infernal Hermes, imprisoning Earth, and also Persephone! I lay a spell upon Dexias before all these deities, also upon Cleophrades, Naubates, Ctesias with all his family."

* κατάδεσις κατάδεσμος are used by Plato for witchcraft: and the Hebrew "Chabar," *to bewitch*, properly signifies *to bind*.

The defunct Athenian must assuredly have departed this life full of charity towards all his neighbours to have taken such pains to carry with him a memorandum so expressive of his wishes on their behalf. It reminds one of the old Monmouthshire farmer, who (as tradition tells), dying of a broken heart, ordered the bitterest verses of the "Cursing Psalm" to be engraved upon his tombstone for the benefit of his enemy; as it may yet be seen at Christchurch, near Caerleon, Monmouthshire. The Verulamium scrolls (p. 339) contained invocations of the opposite character, for the benefit of the parties named therein. Yet another variety are the leaden scrolls found numerously in the lately discovered Demetrium of Cnidus. Some evidently belong to a kind of ordeal—the accused party asking to be ill-treated by Persephone in the next world, if guilty of such or such a charge; others contain similar ill wishes against individuals therein specified who have injured the writers. By far the most curious of these relics is the leaden plate, found at Bath (1880), engraved with four lines of words placed in their proper order, but spelt backwards for the sake of disguise, and about four inches square. It is thus read by Zangemeister:

"Qui mihi mantilium involavit
Sic liquat com aqua olla . . . ta
Ni qui eam salvavit . . . vinna vel
Exsupersus Verrianus Servianus
Itianus Sagarbalis Cubus
Minianus cum Sovina
Ceramanilli."

This reading is not satisfactory in many places. The lost object is written MATHV, MATEHV, to be read backwards, like all the rest, and therefore bears no resemblance to "mantelium."

The malignity of the Greek character is exemplified in nothing more strongly than in the open toleration of the use of such engines of spite. In the great Temple of Demeter at Cnidus, Mr. Newton found many of these leaden scrolls invoking the vengeance of the goddess of the place, her daughter, and the other infernal gods, upon individuals specified by name. It will be remarked that this "dira detestatio" was not contingent upon the refusal of a just demand, as in the case of the worthy

Silurian hereafter to be mentioned; but were the means of revenge resorted to by persons too cowardly to use those supplied by nature, or probably for the mere sake of gratifying spite.

As a Roman *pendant* to this Athenian legacy of curses, I copy the leaden scroll found, many years ago, in the garden of the Villa Manenti, upon the Via Latina. De Rossi, who first published it in the 'Bullettino del Instit. Arch. Rom.' for 1852, is of opinion that orthography and characters indicate the date of the last century of the Republic. "Quomodo mortuos qui istic sepultus est nec loqui nec sermonari potest, seic Rhodine apud M. Licinium Faustum mortua sit, nec loqui nec sermonari possit. Ita ut mortuos nec ad Deos nec ad homines acceptus est, ita Rhodine apud M. Licinium accepta sit, et tantum valeat quantum illé mortuos quei istic sepultus est; Dite Pater! Rhodinen tibi commendo ut semper odio sit M. Licinio Fausto, item M. Hedium Amphionem, item C. Popillium Apollonium, item Vennonia Hermiona, item Sergia Glycinna." It is easy to construct a history out of these lines, the despairing lover dying from the perfidy of the fair Rhodine, who has jilted him for the noble Licinius. Faustus prays the God of Hell to make her distasteful to her possessor, and also to punish her aiders and abettors, whose Greek cognomens show them to be of the condition of freedmen.

In the same strain we have the commination, sounding to us so jocular, but doubtless in its own time intended for something very serious, addressed to Nodens, discovered amidst the ruins of his not much frequented temple in Lydney Park, Gloucestershire. "Devo Nodenti Silvianus anilum perdedit, demediam (sic) partem donavit Nodenti inter quibus nomen Seniciani nollis permittas sanitatem donec perferat usque Templum Nodentis." Whereby the half-civilized Silurian, as his name betrays, in artless grammar and orthography, beseeches the local deity never to allow Senicianus or any of his family to enjoy health, until he brings back the ring, the loss of which Silvianus ascribes to him, and restores it to the rightful owner at the temple of Nodens: in which case one half its value is promised to the god for his assistance in recovering the stolen property.

These thank-offerings to "Neddyn diw" (perhaps identical with the Etruscan "Nethunos") were made in coppers, the very "stipes" out of which the tesselated pavement of his temple was paid for, as the inscription thereon yet testifies. They were found plentifully strewed over the floor, of every date down to Honorius; then some sudden raid of barbarians gave the whole establishment to the flames.

The idea of "binding" is practically carried out in Spell VII. of Atanasi's 'Mag. Papyrus,' which directs you to lay the link of a chain (κρίκος) upon a leaden plate, and having traced its outline, to write thereon, round the circumference, the common Gnostic legend (reading both ways) continuously:

ΙΑΕΩΒΑΦΡΕΝΕΜΟΤΝΟΘΙΛΑΡΙΚΡΙΦΙ
ΑΕΤΕΑΡΙΦΙΚΡΑΛΙΘΟΝΤΟΜΕΝΕΡΦΑΒΑΩΕΑΙ

Within the circle must be written the nature of the thing it is desired to prevent. The operation is entitled the "Ring of Hermes."

The link was then to be folded up on the leaden plate, and thrown into the grave of one dead before his time, or else into a disused well. After the formula above given was to follow, in Greek, "Prevent thou such and such a person from doing such and such a thing"—a proof that the long string of epithets all referred to the same Power.

We now come to relics of the same sort, but of diverse intention; being those passports to eternal bliss, so frequently mentioned in the course of the preceding dissertation. Of these the most complete example is the Leaden Book formerly belonging to the celebrated Father Kircher, in whose collection it first made its appearance, but concerning the *provenance* of which nothing is known, although Matter *suspects* it to be the same that Montfaucon gave to Cardinal Bouillon, who died at Rome in 1715. But this identification is entirely ungrounded, as shall presently be shown. The same writer has given facsimiles, in his 'Excursion Gnostique,' of the seven pages composing the book, now deposited in the Museum Kircherianum. These leaves are of lead, 3 × 4 inches square, engraved on each side, with a religious composition for heading, under which are, in every case, *five* lines of inscription, that mystic

number having doubtless been purposely adopted by the spell-maker. These lines are written in large Greek capitals, square-shaped, and resembling the character commonly used on Gnostic gems. Intermixed are other forms, some resembling the hieroglyphs still current for the Signs and Planets; others Egyptian Demotic and Pehlevi letters. The language does not appear to be Coptic, but rather some Semitic tongue, many words being composed entirely of *consonants*, showing that the vowels were to be supplied by the reader. The chief interest, however, of the relic lies in the designs heading each page, in which we recognise the usual figures of Gnostic iconology, together with others of a novel character, all touched in with a free and bold graver with the fewest possible strokes. The purport of the writing underneath may be conjectured, on the authority of the 'Litany of the Dead'* and the 'Diagramma of the Ophites,' to be the prayers addressed by the ascending soul to these particular deities, each in his turn. The very number of the pages, *seven* in all, comes to support this explanation. The Astral Presidents to be propitiated in the heavenward journey are represented in the following manner:—

1. A nude female figure, in which the navel (the "circle of the Sun") is strongly defined: she makes a gesture of adoration to a genius in a conical cap and short tunic, armed with a trident, Siva's proper weapon, and consequently appropriated afterwards by the mediæval Ruler of Tartarus.

Reverse. Palm within a circle or garland, and a large Caduceus.

2. Female in flowing robes, addressing a gigantic fowl, much too squat, apparently, in its proportions for the ibis of Thoth: perhaps intended for the yet more divine bird, the phœnix.

* In the pictures to which the disembodied spirit "before his journey addresses his prayers to the various gods, and then enters upon his labours. He attacks with spear in hand the crocodiles, lizards, scorpions and snakes which beset his path; and passing through these dark regions he at length reaches the land of the Amenti, whose goddess is a hawk standing upon a perch. Here the sun's rays cheer his steps, and he meets amongst other wonders the head of Horus rising out of a lotus-flower, the god Pthah, the phœnix, his own soul in the form of a bird with a human head, and the goddess Isis as a serpent of goodness. The soul then returns to the mummy and puts life into its mouth."—(Sharpe, 'Egypt. Mythol.,' p. 65.)

Reverse. Nude female adoring a certain undefined monster, furnished with large ears, and placed upon a low altar. The first line of the accompanying prayer seems to begin with the Pehlevi letters equivalent to S, P, V.

3. Horus, leaning upon an instrument of unknown use, regarding a huge tortoise, better drawn than the rest, which is crawling towards him.

Reverse. Female in long flowing robes, holding up her hands to a naked child (Horus?), who is in the act of leaping down to her from a lofty pedestal.

4. Anubis attired in a short mantle (reminding one of Mephistopheles) attentively contemplating a lofty hill, the apex whereof has the form of an eagle's head.

Reverse. Female in rags leaning on a staff advancing towards another richly clothed and crowned, who lifts up her hands as though terrified at the apparition.

5. Abraxas in his proper form, looking towards a female fully draped, who offers him some indistinct symbol, much resembling an E turned upside down. The prayer below opens with the word ΙΑΩ; whence it may be fairly *conjectured* that the first characters in each of the other pages give the name of the deity pictured above.

Reverse. Frog and serpent facing each other: ancient emblems of Spring, but probably used here in their mediæval sense as types of the Resurrection of the body.

6. A headless man with rays issuing from his shoulders, and holding out a torch, appears falling backwards with affright on the approach of a winged dragon.

Reverse. A squat personage with radiated crown stands in front face in the attitude of the Egyptian Typhon. On the other side stands a very indistinct figure, resembling a Cupid, having square-cut wings, his back turned to the spectator.

7. Female with robe flying in an arch over her head, as Iris is commonly pictured, extends her hand to an approaching bull: the drawing of the latter being vastly superior to any of the other figures. One is led to discover in this group Venus and her tutelary sign, Taurus.

Reverse. Female reclining on the ground, towards whom advances a large bird, seemingly meant for a pigeon.

In the sacred animals figuring in these successive scenes it is impossible to avoid discovering an allusion to the forms the Gnostics gave to the planetary Rulers. A legend of theirs related how the Saviour in his descent to this lower world escaped the vigilance of these Powers by assuming their *own form* as he traversed the sphere of each, whence a conjecture may be hazarded that similar metamorphoses of the illumined soul are hinted at in these inexplicable pictures.

We now come to the consideration of a second relic of the same kind, known as "Card. Bouillon's Leaden Book." How Matter could have supposed this to be the same with Kircher's (supposing him ever to have compared his own facsimiles with Montfaucon's) is a thing totally beyond my comprehension. For Montfaucon, in his Plate 187, has given every leaf of the former, apparently copied with sufficient fidelity: the pictures on which I shall proceed to describe for the purpose of comparison with those in the Kircherian volume; for the general analogy in the designs attests the similar destination of both monuments, whilst at the same time the variation in details proves the existence of *two* distinct specimens of this interesting class.

The leaves within the two covers, connected by rings secured by a rod passed through them, are only *six* in number; whilst the inscriptions, though in much the same lettering as the Kircherian copy, fill only *four* lines on a page, and only *four* pages in all: the other eight pages having pictures alone.

Now to describe these pictures, which seem in better drawing than those of the former set.* Page 1. Man, nude, standing up. 2. Female fully draped, walking. 3. The same figure, extending one hand. 4. Anubis in a short mantle. 5. The usual figure of the Abraxas god. 6. Bird-headed man surrounded with rays (Phre?). 7. Bust of Serapis. 8. Female reclining. 9. Terminal figure in the form of a cross. 10. Frog. 11. Ibis, or Phœnix. 12. Female holding above her head a star-spangled veil.

* The improvement is probably only due to the French copyist.

Montfaucon supposes all these figures represent the genii who preside over the *hours* of the day—the first being expressive of *rising*, the last of *night*; and calls attention to the fact that the *seventh* page is assigned to Serapis, who sometimes receives the title of ἑπταγράμματος θεός. But in his Plate 188, Montfaucon copies from Bononi's 'Museum Kircherianum' another leaden book "found in a sepulchre," which actually has seven pages, and two figures heading each, in the specimen pages: and this may possibly be the one since published in its entirety by Matter; although at present the leaves are separate, not connected into a book, which may be the result of accident during the century and a half that has elapsed since it was first noticed.

Another discovery of the same nature has been made in our own times, and investigated with the greatest care. In the year 1852, whilst excavating the ruins of a tomb in the Vigna Marini, near the Porta Pia, a marble sarcophagus was brought to light, ornamented with a bas-relief representing either the Adoration of the Magi, or else the prototype of that scene, the "Birth of the New Sun." The floor of the tomb was paved with a mosaic equally ambiguous in subject, whether a Madonna and Child, or, what the concomitants render more probable, Isis suckling the infant Harpocrates. Several minor sarcophagi in terra-cotta surrounded the larger one; and in these were found many leaden plates, rolled up into scrolls, not bound-up like books. Eleven of these can still be deciphered. Matter publishes facsimiles of three of the best preserved, but none of them present any legends like the examples above described.

On the first is seen Anubis wearing a long tunic and buskins, and holding out a scroll; at his feet are two female busts: below all are two serpents entwined about the same object as in the second scroll, where also the same busts appear, viz. a corpse swathed up like a mummy. In the second scroll these busts are set on each side of the Anubis, a large figure much mutilated, but attired as above, and holding out a cross, the "Sign of Life." Under his feet lies the corpse, encircled in the numerous folds of a huge serpent, the Agathodæmon, guardian of the deceased. And this last type supplies the motive for so frequently placing upon gems the serpent-girt mummy. In the

olden creed the serpent watched over tombs as well as over buried treasure. When Æneas is offering sacrifice at his father's grave (v. 84)—

> "Dixerat haec; adytis cum lubricus anguis ab imis
> Septem ingens gyros, septena volumina, traxit,
> Amplexus placide tumulum, lapsusque per aras;
> Coeruleae cui terga notae, maculosus et auro
> Squamam incendebat fulgor, ceu nubilus arcus
> Mille jacit varios adverso sole colores.
> Obstupuit visu Æneas. Ille agmine longo
> Tandem inter pateras, et lœvia pocula serpens,
> Libavitque dapes, rursusque innoxius imo
> Successit tumulo, et depasta altaria liquit.
> Hoc magis inceptos genitori instaurat honores;
> Incertus geniumne loci famulumve parentis
> Esse putet."

In the third scroll, the most valuable of all, the same Anubis bears on his arm an oblong object, perhaps the Roman *scutum*, held so as to convert the outline of the figure into a complete Latin cross. Across this shield and the field run a number of Gnostic symbols, conspicuous amongst which is the sigil prescribed by Alexander Trallianus as a cure for the colic. Others resemble some ordinary Masons' Marks. For example, an eight-armed cross, a circle, and a square cut by horizontal and vertical lines: at the god's foot is a rhomboid, the Egyptian "Egg of the World," towards which crawls a serpent coiled into a circle. A remarkable addition is the inscription carved over the tunic in semi-cursive letters:

ΚΕΒΝΤ	ΕΚΒΛ
ΦΚΤΚ	ΚΟΙ
ΒΚΕ	Α
ΝΦ	Θ
✲	

Under the pairs of busts in the other scrolls is the letter ω, repeated *seven* times in a line: reminding one of the "Names," the interpretation whereof has been already given from the *Pistis-Sophia* (p. 16). Very remarkable also is the line of characters, apparently Palmyrene, upon the legs of the first Anubis. As for the figure of the *serpent*, supposing these talismans to emanate not from the Isiac but the newer Ophite

numerals giving the sum 99, written in Greek ρ. In another place (iv. 51) Hippolytus observes that "almost every heresy is indebted to the science of arithmetic for its *invention* of the Hebdomads, and its emanation of the Æons; although the different teachers divide them variously, and change their names, doing in reality nothing more: in all which way of proceeding Pythagoras is their true master, he who first brought with him out of *Egypt the use of numbers in such matters.*"

The so-called "Pythagorean Numerals" of unknown antiquity, whether or not due to the Samian sage, are said to be preserved to us by Boethius, "the last of the Romans," in his treatise on Arithmetic. That they would be the true parents of our *Arabic* numerals is at once apparent by inverting the figures standing for 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 0. Their forms look like certain Palmyrene letters slightly modified. The Palmyrene is a very ancient Syriac alphabet, totally different in origin from either Punic or Pehlevi. The ancient importance of this character is apparent from what Epiphanius notices (Hær. lxvi.). "Manes divided his work into 22 books, being the number of the letters in the Syriac alphabet. For most of the Persians use the Syriac character as well as the Persian, just as with us many nations, although having a national alphabet of their own, yet employ the Greek. Others again pride themselves upon using the most cultivated dialect, viz. that current in Palmyra, both the dialect itself and its letters; and these are 22 in number."

In this affectation of the learned in Persia, a sufficient reason presents itself for the occasional appearance of Palmyrene letters in spells composed and sold by the Magi or their semi-Grecian disciples under the Roman Empire. The practice went back far beyond the epoch of the great heresiarch, for many Babylonian cylinders are known inscribed, instead of the cumbrous cuneiform, with a Semitic lettering, sometimes more resembling the Palmyrene than the Punic. And even when the Pehlevi had become the national alphabet of Persia there was very good reason why the cultivators of polite literature should prefer the Palmyrene alphabet for its superior copiousness, their own possessing no more than fifteen distinct characters. And, lastly, the remark of Epiphanius deserves attention as to certain

Western nations then possessing alphabets of their own: for it proves, contrary to the received opinion, that as late as A.D. 400 they had not all been superseded by the Greek or the Latin letters throughout the whole extent of the Roman world.

The curious question of these Numerals, and the deep ideas involved therein, has led us far away from the proper object of this chapter—sepulchral scrolls. Their use was carried on by the Christians down to comparatively recent times. Fauno describes amongst the innumerable *bijoux* of all kinds deposited in the coffin* of the infant imperial bride Maria Honorii "a small plate of gold on which were written, or rather scratched, the words, in Greek, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel." And the Abbé Cochet has figured in his very interesting researches † in the old Norman cemeteries many leaden plates, cross-shaped, inscribed with prayers, placed regularly upon the breast of the buried body. Out of four examples found in the old cemetery of Bouteilles, Dieppe, the most complete formula, written in a character that cannot be later than the thirteenth century, runs as follows: "Dñs IHC XPC qui dixit discipulis suis quodcunque ligaveritis super terram erit ligatum et in celis quodcunque solveritis super terram erit solutum et in celis de quorum numero licet nos indignos nos esse voluit ipse te absolvet per ministerium nostrum quodcunque fecisti cogitatione locutione negligenter atque necibus omnibus absolutum perducere dignetur in regnum celorum qui vivit et regnat Deus per secula saeculorum amen. Omnipotens Deus misereatur animo Mesaline condonet peccata tibi preterita presentia et futura liberet te ab omni malo conservet et confirmet itinere bono et perducat te Christus filius Dei ad vitam eternam et ad sanctorum consortium absolutione et remissione penitentia tribuat tibi Masaline omnipotens pius et misericors IHC Amen." The Abbé states that it is still the custom in the Russian Church for the *popa* at a funeral, after reading the form of absolution, to place the paper in the hand of the corpse to accompany him into the grave.

The remarkable properties of Numerals captivated the fancy

* Discovered Feb., 1544, in digging the foundations of the Chapel of the Kings of France, in St. Peter's, Rome; and fully described by M. L. Fauno in his 'Antichità di Roma,' p. 151 published 1553.

† 'Sépultures Gauloises,' chap. xiii.

of Man as soon as the science of arithmetic was invented. From their powers of infinite multiplication the ancients gave them sexes: making the odd the males, the even the females of the species. This assumption plays a great part in the theosophy of Marcus. From this idea, the next step was a very easy one —the attribution of mystic virtues to certain combinations of numerals that produced curious results by their addition. Of such, the most striking example is the Magic Square; the grand mediæval charm against the plague, and therefore conspicuous in Albert Durer's picture of 'Melancholy,' where the dull goddess sits in gloomy abstraction, surrounded by the emblems of all the arts and sciences. This, which however

4	14	15	1
9	7	6	12
5	11	10	8
16	2	3	13

added, gives the same result, viz., 34.

The celebrated Caireen magician of forty years ago, employed a diagram constructed on the same principle, but with different numerals, into the middle of which, traced on a sheet

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

of paper, he poured the little pool of ink which served for mirror to exhibit the spectres of the persons called for by his dupes. And, to conclude this subject in an appropriate manner, a fifteenth century MS. in the library of this college, amongst a number of charms, gave this "for procuring favour with all men;" always carry about you written down—

A . X . H . B . X . U . Y . III . K . O

Fig. 17.

PART V.

TEMPLARS, ROSICRUCIANS, FREE-MASONS.

"*Inscriptiones* propter quas vadimonium deseri possit: at cum intraveris, Di Deaeque! quam nihil in medio invenies." (Plin. H. N. Praef.)

TEMPLARS, ROSICRUCIANS, FREEMASONS.

PRESERVATION OF GNOSTIC SYMBOLS AMONGST THE FREEMASONS.

At the first sight it is absolutely startling to recognise so many Gnostic (primarily Indian) symbols, figuring so conspicuously amongst the insignia and illustrated formulæ of our Freemasons, and that, too, apparently in their original sense as exponents of the deepest mysteries, human and divine—a circumstance of itself lending a specious colour to the pretensions of the Order to the most venerable antiquity. "Inscriptiones propter quas vadimonia deseri possint. Sed ubi intraveris, Dii Deæque! quam nihil in medio invenies," to quote old Pliny's words in speaking of the charlatans of his day. For the pleasing illusion vanishes when we come to investigate the line of their descent; and the Fraternity, though claiming them as its own legitimate inheritance, turns out at the end a mere daw in borrowed plumes.

To begin by stating these claims, as recently put forward by one of their most zealous and pugnacious defenders: "The mere *title* may be comparatively modern; for the society in antediluvian (!) and prehistorical times most undoubtedly was not called Freemasonry. But the *thing* was in existence, and has descended to our own day." "On the arrival of the Romans in Britain, we find Cæsar and several of the Roman generals who succeeded him in the government of the island becoming patrons and protectors of the craft; but there is no information to be found in regard to the usages and customs prevalent among them at that time. Their lodges and conventions were

regularly held, but were open only to the initiated fellows. There is enough however to show that the same society which now flourishes everywhere was then in existence, holding lodges and conventions and having its initiated fellows. I may add, that a regular list of Grand Masters can be produced quite as genuine and reliable as that of the Archbishops of Canterbury, or of the Kings of England. If that in itself is not valid evidence enough of the continued existence of the same society in England from the earliest historical period down to the present date, I don't know what *would* be admitted as sufficient evidence." "Going back to A.D. 300 we find the Emperor Carausius supporting it, and appointing Albanus, his Steward, Grand Master. This was none other than the famous St. Alban, the first British martyr, who was born at Verulam, now St. Albans, in Hertfordshire."*

The above is an unusually brilliant specimen of the logic of the Brotherhood, that assumes in every notice of *building* and *builders* to be found in antiquity a recognition of the then existence of their own society exactly as at present constituted. The old guild of *working-masons* seems to have made pretensions of the same nature (if we allow the genuineness of the *supposed* Bodleian MS. copied by Locke); for their great patron Henry VI. informs his scholar that "the Mystery was first brought into England by Peter Gower" (Pythagoras)—a corruption of the name, by the way; plainly betraying that he had obtained this piece of information from a *French mouth*, probably from some one in the suite of his queen. It is not unlikely that this connexion of the Father of Mathematics with the building trade arose from the study of that science by the Greek and Roman architects: for upon the vital importance of a knowledge of Mathematics to his own profession Vitruvius repeatedly and strongly insists. But this very king, whom our Freemasons claim as their chief resuscitator, furnishes the most conclusive evidence against the reality of their modern pretensions. By the advice of the Bishop of Winchester, better known as Cardinal Beaufort, he passed an Act, in his third year, forbidding

* From a letter published in the 'Cork Constitution,' Jan. 15, 1866, by John Milner, B.A., Chaplain to H.M.S. Hector.

Masons to hold lodges or any meetings whatsoever, which protection is clearly directed against no higher things than mere "trade-union" proceedings. But at a later period he showed the Masons more favour, and even attended their meetings, as did his contemporary James I. of Scotland. But the question is set at rest by the language of the Act:* "First, Whereas by the assembling congregations and confederacies made by the Masons in their grand chapters and assemblies the good cause and effect of the *Statute of Labourers* be openly violated and broken, in subversion of the law and to the great damage of all the commons, our said Lord the King willing in this case to provide remedy by the advice and assent aforesaid, and at the special request of the said commons, hath ordered and established, that such chapiters and congregations shall not be hereafter made, they that cause such chapiters and congregations to be assembled and holden, if they thereof be convict, shall be judged for felons. And that all the other masons that come to such chapiters and congregations, be punished by imprisonment of their bodies, and make fine and ransom at the king's will."

The language of this Act is sufficiently conclusive, but for accumulation of proofs, I shall proceed to establish the same position by giving a summary of the *oldest*, and only *genuine* document extant on the subject of Masonry. This document is a MS. Bib. Reg. 17. A. I. ff. 32, written in a hand that cannot be *later* than the close of the 13th century, and of which a copy has been published by J. O. Halliwell. It commences with a history of Architecture from the beginning, and of the introduction of the art into England, and then proceeds to give, in rhyme, the Rules of the Craft, conceived in precisely the same business-like spirit as those of a Trades-Union. The preamble is: "Hic incipiunt Constitutiones Artis Geometricae secundum Euclydem."† Once upon a time a certain king and his nobles had such large families as to be unable to maintain them decently, and taking counsel together devised they should be

* 'Statutes at Large,' ed. Keble, 1695. 3 Hen. VI. cap. 1.

† What follows is a much condensed summary of the sense of the old Mason's rhymes.

taught some trade whereby to live. A great clerk Euclyde proposed teaching them geometry, called *Masonry*, the most honest craft of all. He ordered that the most advanced of his scholars should be styled Master by the rest, but that he should call none of his inferiors either *subject* or *servant*, but always *my dear brother*.

> "In this manner by good wit and Geometry,
> Began first the Craft of Masonry."

Euclyde invented and taught the same in Egypt: many years afterwards it was brought into England in King Athelstan's time. This good king loved the Craft and built many towers, halls, bowers, and temples. But finding out many defects in the Craft he determined to reform the same and summoned an *Assembly* of all the masons in England together with all his lords and commons, and,

> "Fifteen Articles there they brought,
> And Fifteen Points there they wrote."

Art. I. The master must be just and true, and pay his fellows according to the price of provisions: neither exact more from his employer than he pays his men; nor take bribes from either side.

II. Every master-mason must attend the general congregation or *Assembly*, wherever it shall be held, unless hindered by sickness, else shall he be accounted disobedient to the Craft and full of falseness.

III. No prentice to be taken for less than seven years, for in less time he cannot learn his business either to his employer's profit or to his own.

IV. No bondsman may be taken for prentice. Otherwise it might so happen that his lord might take him out of the *lodge* itself, and so occasion great tumult, for all the masons would stand together by their fellow. The prentice must therefore be taken of the master's own degree; but of old times it was ordained he should be of gentle blood, and even great lords' sons took to this geometry.

V. The prentice must be of lawful birth, and sound both in mind and body:

"For an imperfect man of such blood,
Should do the Craft but little good.
A maimed man he hath no might,
Ye may it knowen long ere night."

VI. The master must not take from his employer the same pay for the prentice as for the perfect workman. Nevertheless, before the prentice's time is out, as he increases in knowledge, so may his wages be proportionably raised.

VII. The master must neither for love nor money clothe, feed, or harbour a thief, nor a homicide, nor one of bad fame, all which would bring the Craft to shame.

VIII. If the master finds any of his men incompetent he must turn him off, and take another in his place, "as such a hand would do the Craft short worship."

IX. The master must undertake no job that he is unable to finish, and must see that he lays the foundation so that it will neither give nor crack.

X. No master-mason must supplant another under penalty of ten pounds unless where the work has tumbled down through the incompetence of the first builder. In all points of this "curious Craft" masons must live together like brethren.

XI. No mason is to work by night unless for the sake of trying experiments for amending errors.

XII. No mason must disparage the work of another, but rather must praise the same, and if wrong, privately advise him how to aright it.

XIII. The prentice must be taught every branch of the business, and be put upon work suitable to his ability.

XIV. The master must take no prentices, unless he have divers jobs in hand, in order to teach them the trade.

XV. The prentice must be a friend to his master, never deceive him for the sake of another; neither stand by his fellows in a wrong cause, nor take a false oath.

These *Fifteen Points* were likewise ordained at the aforesaid Assembly:—

I. The mason must love God, Holy Church, and his fellow-masons, wherescever he may go.

II. The mason must work as truly as he can upon the work-day, and so deserve his pay upon the holy day.

III. The prentice is on no account to divulge any trade secrets.

"This Third Point it must be special,
Let the prentice know it well,
His master's counsel he keep and close,
And his fellows', by good purpose;
The secrets of the *chamber* he tell to none,
Nor in the *lodge* whatever is done.
Whatever thou seest or hearest them do,
Tell it no man wherever thou go.
The counsel of hall and eke of bower,
Keep it well in great honour,
Lest it should bring thyself to blame,
And bring the Craft into great shame."

IV. That no mason be false to the Craft nor maintain his cause against it: neither do prejudice to master nor fellow, and that the prentice stand in awe.

V. The master must take his wages, whatever ordained him, without disputing. The master, if unable to find them work as before, to give them warning in the forenoon.

VI. If any dispute or quarrel arise amongst the masons, the master must make them put off the settlement thereof until the next holy day; and not allow it to be settled upon a work-day, lest it should hinder the work in hand.

VII. Not to lie with thy master's or fellow's wife or concubine under penalty of serving another seven years of prenticeship.

VIII. If thou hast taken any job under thy master, be a faithful middleman between thy master and thy fellows.

IX. When the fellows have a *common chamber* then they must take the stewardship in turns, week by week. All victuals to be paid for as received, and regular accounts to be kept of the common expenses.

"Of thy fellows' goods that thou hast spent,
When, and how, and to what end,
Such accounts thou must come to
When thy fellows would thou do."

X. If a mason lives amiss and is false to his work, he must, without favour, be convened before the Assembly, and punished

according to the law of old ordained: or, in case he refuses to appear, he must forswear the profession.

XI. If a skilled mason observe his fellow cutting a stone and likely to spoil it through his own ignorance, he must advise him in fair words, and teach him how to amend it, not to bring shame upon the whole work.

XII. That whatever shall be ordained in the Assembly, being present the master and fellows, nobles, burghers, and the sheriff of the county, and the mayor of the town, *that* thou shall maintain against all thy fellows, if disposed to dispute the same.

XIII. The mason must swear never to be a thief himself, nor for any fee or reward to abet one that is.

XIV. Before the Assembly breaks up, each must be sworn unto his master and fellows, to the king, and to all these present. Also they must seek out every one that hath contravened any one law thereof, and bring them up before the Assembly.

XV. And if found guilty, they must forswear the Craft:

> "And so mason's craft they must refuse,
> And swear it never more to use,"

unless they consent to make amends. If refractory, the sheriff is to cast them into prison during the king's good pleasure, and take their goods and chattels for the king's use. The Assembly must be held every year, or at least every third year. Unto the same must come every man of the Craft, and all the great nobles, to amend all infractions, and to swear obedience to the Constitutions of King Athelstan; and especially to make bold petition to the king that he stand by the masons everywhere and enforce the same statutes.

Next follows 'Ars Quattuor Coronatorum,' a manual of religious and moral duties, and also of good manners in company.

> "The Four Masters—
> Who were as good Masons as on earth could go,
> Gravers and image-makers they were also,"

were commanded by the Emperor to make an idol to be worshipped. On their refusal he first imprisoned and tortured them, and at last put them to death. These be the "Quattuori

Coronati," and their festival falls on the eighth day after All Saints. Many years after Noah's Flood, was begun the Tower of Babylon. It was built up to the height of seven miles, by order of Nebuchadnezzar, for a refuge in case of another deluge. But an angel, in order to punish his pride, smote all the builders with confusion of tongues. After this Euclid taught geometry, and gave his scholars the following rules.

Behaviour in Church.—To use the holy-water on going in: to kneel down, never sit nor stand, make no noise nor talk, but pray all the time, saying certain prayers given in the text. To attend mass daily, but if at work to repeat a certain prayer upon hearing the mass-bell.

In Company.—On coming before a lord, to doff cap or hood nor put in on again until bid; make two or three bows with the right leg, hold up thy chin, look him sweetly in the face; do not scrape the foot, nor spit or blow thy nose. On entering a hall amongst the *gentelles*, be not presumptuous on account of thy birth or skill:

> "In hall or chamber where thou dost gan,
> Good manners make the man."

When sitting down to meat, see thy hands be clean and knife sharp: cut the bread and meat ready for eating. If sitting by a worshipful man, suffer him to help himself first. Keep thy hands clean, smudge not the napkin, on which thou must not blow thy nose: nor pick thy teeth at table; neither drink with anything in the mouth, nor dip thy chin too deep in the cup, nor talk to thy neighbour when drinking.

> "In chamber among the ladies bright,
> Spare thy tongue, and spend thy sight."

Talk not of thine own matters, neither for mirth nor for mede. Play only with thine equals. On meeting a man of worship be sure to cap him; walk a little way behind him; never interrupt his speech; be brief and fair in thy replies, &c.

> "Christ then, of his grace,
> Give you both the wit and space
> Well this book to con and read,
> Heaven to have for your mede.
> Amen! Amen! So mote it bee!
> So say we all *par charité*."

Any reader of common intelligence will perceive that the good priest, author of this the oldest extant document upon Masonry, had not the remotest idea of the same as being the possession of a *secret society*, established for some hidden end, whether religious or political. The very rules which he professes to transcribe from the Constitutions of Athelstan, are as plain-spoken, matter-of-fact as those of a modern Trades-Union, differing only from the latter in the larger admixture of common sense and honesty that they display, the whole winding up with directions for behaviour in good society, as laid down by some anticipatory Chesterfield. The "secrets of the lodge" are manifestly nothing more than matters pertaining to the trade discussed amongst the masons at their lodgings after work, and very inexpedient for them to be divulged to outsiders. And to come to the most essential point of the question which these Constitutions fully establish, "the Assembly" is, so far from being a secret chapter, held by the Free and Accepted Brethren only, that it *must* actually be presided over by the sheriff of the county, and the mayor of the town where it is held! for the purpose of settling all matters connected with the building-trade; being in fact nothing more than what was called in those times an "Assize of Labour."

An interesting feature in the treatise is the fact of its ascribing these same "Constitutions" to King Athelstan. There is very good reason for accepting this statement as founded upon trustworthy tradition. The Saxon Prince was the first British sovereign who possessed either wealth or inclination for decorative architecture or building of any sort. His father, Edward the Elder, and his aunt Ethelfleda "the Lady of Mercia," are recorded as the first of the Saxon line who built fortifications of stone about their chief cities. Before this the Saxons, like all other Teutons, had no other idea of building than of constructions in wood, all stone-masons had to be brought over from France when wanted (as numerous references, unnecessary here to quote, conclusively evince), in which country architecture had kept up a feeble existence after the fall of the Empire, its preservation being due to the patronage of the Church, which kept growing in wealth and

power in proportion as the Roman authority died away. The simplicity of the Constitutions in prescribing the convening of mere *craftsmen* under the presidency of the sheriff and mayor, betokens a truly Saxon state of society, and moreover a time when these masons were actually working-men. Under the Normans, regular architects (in one sense) first appear as the "Masters," who were almost invariably churchmen. Furthermore, the prohibition against taking a "*bondman*" for prentice unmistakably betokens the same early period, when domestic slavery, not mere *villanage*, was recognised by law: the Norman legislation makes no such distinction of bond and free.

Aubrey indeed quotes the authority of Dugdale that "the Fraternity of Adopted Masons," having *signs* and *passwords* for the purpose of mutual recognition, owed its origin to a company of Italian masons, who in Henry III.'s time obtained a patent from the Pope to go about Europe, building churches. But the absurdity of this statement is manifested by a single fact: when the Italians of that period wished to erect any important edifice, so far from being competent to do so for other nations, they were forced to call in architects from Germany and France. To give a few decisive examples, as regards the wealthiest and most polished states of that country:—Pisa employed Guglielmo il *Tedesco* to plan her celebrated Campanile; Florence, Lapo, *alias* Jacopo il *Tedesco*, father of Arnolfo (who had already gained high reputation by the triple church he had built at Assisi for the Franciscans), to construct their bridge "Alla Carraia," the Bargello or Townhall, several churches, and to drain the Piazza Grande. Even a century later the Visconti were obliged to employ German architects to design the Duomo at Milan. It is true Henry III. had in his pay one Peter "civis Romanus," but only in the capacity of a decorative artist, for the mosaic work at the Westminster Shrine. But in truth, during the entire Gothic period, architecture, as a national art, may be said to have been extinct in Italy, the grand centre of the art then being established in the very middle of France.

All this evidence goes to show that our Freemasons have no

relationship, either actual or traditional, with the mediæval guilds bearing the same appellation, a pretence they so zealously maintain. The latter were corporations of real workmen, in which each person, after serving a regular apprenticeship, and, according to the custom still kept up in some counties, producing a *trial-piece* to prove his competency, was admitted "free" of the Guild, and "accepted" amongst the members of the same. The compotations accompanying the ceremony are in truth the sole point of resemblance between the ancient and the modern Freemasons.

The 'Bulletin Monumental' for 1884, p. 34, contains a memoir, "Les signes de Tacherons sur les remparts d'Avignon," which gives the fullest collection (six pages) of these marks that has ever been published. They can be here traced from Roman times where they appear as single letters or as Trionian shorthand, down to the actual Masons' Marks of mediæval and modern times. Many clearly represent the tools used in building. Some of these marks, and more of those from Avignon, are to be recognised upon Lichfield's "Baphometic Tablet;" which may, after all, be no modern forgery, but a genuine register of such segli of the seventeenth century.*

The mediæval guild of Masons, as we have seen, was no more a *secret society* than were the guilds of Carpenters, Cordwainers or Tailors. Every man indeed belonging to the first-named (and this is the only thing belonging to the Craft, that really carries with it an air of mysterious antiquity) had, upon admission, a *mark* (or cypher) assigned him, which he was bound to put upon every stone he dressed (a rule still observed) in order to distinguish his work from that of his fellows, against the time when the materials should be examined by the master-mason, who paid him for those approved, but stopped his wages for those spoiled through his fault. Similarly every "Merchant of the Staple" joined with his initials upon his seal, or trade mark, the *mark* of the staple-town to which he belonged. This latter, though

* Most interesting of all, on account of their early date, are the Masons' Marks at Westminster Hall, lately published by Dr. Freshfield, in the Archæologia, Vol. 50, Part I.

much alike in outline, was variously modified so as to indicate each of the fifteen towns in England, Ireland, and Wales, appointed by Edward III. In all mediæval documents relating to building, the name "Freemason" signifies merely the worker in hewn stone, the inferior workman who ran up the body of the wall in rubble or ragstone being called the "Rough-waller." Lastly, a very puzzling question presents itself—if our Freemasons be the legitimate successors in an unbroken line of the ancient lodges and guilds, how came it that all the principles of Gothic architecture were utterly lost within less than a century?

But to return to the marks themselves, of which many collections have been published gathered from regions the most widely separated. Their history is indeed full of interest but likewise of obscurity; "res alta nocte et caligine mersae." Many of them are traditional, and go back to the highest antiquity, being found on Phœnician* and Greek buildings (as well as on vases and coins of the earliest times), and in still larger abundance and variety in all mediæval architecture. These marks were in the beginning religious symbols, many of them being identical with the *caste-marks*, whereby to this day the followers of the respective Hindoo gods are distinguished from one another. This religious significance explains also their occurrence on Celtic monuments, as on the Stonehenge lintel, and the Newton Stone, Aberdeen, and so numerously on the Gallic coins; but they have for centuries, further back than can be traced, degenerated into the mere signatures of illiterate mechanics.† To illustrate this curious point, I shall adduce a

* A most interesting example is the stone in the second course of the Temple Wall, S.E. Jerusalem, discovered Jan. 1869. It bears two marks, deeply cut, ⊕ and H. Other marks in *red paint* resemble Phœnician letters. Deutsch observed many such on the walls of the old Castle of Sidon, built from ancient materials. He considers them numeral, unity to 9 being represented by vertical lines, 10 by a horizontal, 20 by two parallels, &c. It is, however, ridiculous to attribute the foundation of the Temple Wall to Solomon's architects, the fact of its being cut through ten feet of rubbish thrown from above proves it to have been done long *after* the city was inhabited, and therefore the work of Agrippa.

† Who have introduced a refinement upon the old system, viz., the necessity of every mark terminating in an odd number of *ends*.

few of the most remarkable examples of lapidary symbolism,* giving, as in duty bound, precedence to the late discovery at Stonehenge. The mark is cut upon the fallen impost lying across the supposed altar. It is nine inches long and clearly defined, and may be described as a semicircle of which the diameter being produced, its own length terminates in a second semicircle reversed and open, combined with the Roman letters, L, V; having in fact much the appearance of a *sigla* or *nota scriptoria*. The mark has therefore something in its look that suggests the signature LVCIUS. Had the sagacious Stukeley discovered this inscription he would unquestionably upon the strength thereof have ascribed the whole fabric to the British Lucius so renowned in fable. It must not however be concealed that our fashionable scepticism has impugned the reality of even this most venerable "handwriting on the wall." Dr. Thurman has hunted up three credible witnesses ready to make affidavit that they saw with their own eyes a certain stranger cut the sigil.† But inasmuch as it would be equally facile, by means of *leading questions* dexterously put, to obtain the testimony of the same number of "bucolical juveniles" that they were present at the erection of Stonehenge itself, the genuineness of the mark (so *un*modern in configuration) seems to me in no measure disproved. Symbolic figures, spirals and interesting circles are found on the stones in Newton Grange, Drogheda Cave, Routh Linn, Old Berwick, Doddington Moor, Northumberland; Long Meg, Cumberland. The latter have been published in the Archæological Journal.

But to proceed to actual Caste-marks. We find a casual allusion to their use in ancient writers, who state that the badges distinguishing the three orders of the Egyptian priest-

xix. p. 78.‡

* Regular Masons' marks are visible upon the great hewn stones of the Buddhist buildings at Sarnath, which are known to have been erected before the sixth century; and more of the same kind are found on the ruined buildings of the same religion still to be traced incorporated into the Brahminical edifices within the neighbouring Benares. Sherring, 'Sacred City of the Hindus.'

† It must be remembered the stone is so hardened by weathering as to turn the best chisel!

‡ Lists of Masons' marks have been published in the following works: 'Archæologia' (1845), for Scotland, by Prof. Chalmers; Marks

hood were the ⊖ signifying the *sun;* the T *eternal life;* and the △ *pleasure.* With the Hindoos, the equilateral Triangle symbolises Mahadeva, or Siva, that is, the element Fire personified.

The same figure *inverted* stands for Vishnu, Water.

The two, intersecting each other, form the *Sherkun* or six-points; that is, the two elements in conjunction.

The five-pointed figure, made by bisecting the sides of an equilateral triangle by a line as long as one side, and drawing lines from each extremity of the said line to each foot of the triangle, symbol of Siva and Brahma (the latter god having *five* heads) became, later, the famous "Solomon's Seal." This appellation it must have got in early times, as in virtue thereof it is sculptured along with the seven-branched candlestick upon Sivish tombs dating from the Lower Empire.* The Hindoos still venerate the figure as replete with virtue. Similarly the *Sherkun* is engraved on a large scale upon each side of the gate of the Fort at Agra, although the building is of Mohammedan work.

A point, *Puru*, is the Deity; self existing. A circle, *Brahm*, eternity. Hence a triangle within a circle is the emblem of Trinity in Unity; and the circle inscribed within a triangle the converse.

Worshippers of *Saeti*, the Female Principle, mark their sacred vase with a right angle bisected by a line; and similarly the worshippers of Isis used so to mark the vessel necessary at her rites. But the Vishnaivas have for the same object a symbol of wondrous vitality and diffusion: for it is seen equally on Greek coins and vases, on the Newton Stone, Aberdeen, in ecclesiastical sculpture, where it takes the name "Tetragam-

at Brechin, and signatures to St. Ninian's Roll, coming down to the date 1814. Ditto, for 1844, contains a memoir by G. Godwin, with five plates of marks from England (Gloucester, Tewkesbury), France, Germany (Köln). 'Annales Archéologiques' (1844–5), 'Signes Lapidaires,' from Coucy, Avignon, Palais de Justice, Paris, Vincennes. Rheims, Strasburgh. Most curious of all are those given by Ouseley ('Travels,' pl. 82), as "characters of some unknown alphabet," found by him on the stones of the Old Palace (a Mohammedan building) of Saaditalat, near Ispahan; which nevertheless have a striking resemblance to the European class.

* Numerous examples may be seen in their catacomb at Rome, lately discovered.

maton," being ignorantly supposed the compounds of the letter Γ four times repeated, and its sound and power confounded with those of the sacred "Tetragrammaton," or the Hebrew quadriliteral name Jehovah. This mark is properly the symbol of Sitala, the seventh incarnation, entitled "Trithalesor," a title exactly translated by the alchemical *Trismegistus:* its name is the *Swastika*, an emblem of Resignation; so that the figure may have passed into Byzantine art with some recommendation from a knowledge of its real meaning. In Gothic nomenclature this mark becomes the equally renowned "Fylfot," as to whose etymology the following conjecture may be hazarded. The Swastika signified at first the arms crossed over the breast, the regular Indian gesture of submission, and also the legs similarly folded as the statues of Buddha are usually represented. The symbol is evidently nothing more than the rough outline of the arms and legs thus disposed. May not therefore the Gothic name *Fylfot*, applied to the same hieroglyph, bear through some remote tradition a reference to its real meaning, and imply the sense of *Fold-foot?* In the same way the old Greeks appear to have recognised its true sense, when they changed its simple form into the three conjoined legs that so aptly allude to the name Trinacria. In all probability the great popularity of the symbol, wheresoever the Indo-Germanic race penetrated, was due to the same feeling that renders it still so respected in the land of its origin, its power as a talisman to protect all places where the figure is painted up. The exclamation "Swastika" the Hindoos still employ as a mode of assent, synonymous with "Amen," "So be it." * As the symbol of Resignation the Mark forms the distinctive badge of an ascetic. When a man desires to become a *Bandya* (Buddhist monk) the rites required for his initiation occupy three days, foremost amongst which the Swastika is solemnly set up upon an altar of unbaked bricks; the neophyte being seated on the ground with his legs disposed after the same fashion. In China the Mark is the badge of the *Pon*, the strictest sect of Buddhists, who attribute its invention to Buddha himself, about six centuries before our era. This

* Or, to speak masonically, "So mote it be!"

fact may explain how "denying oneself and taking up the cross" came to signify the embracing an ascetic life; for so evident are the traces of Buddhist influence over the institutions of the Essenes, that it is probable enough the symbol retained its pristine acceptation amongst the sect.

The Swastika occurs amongst the signet-devices of the old Jaina kings of Guzerat (belonging to the far-removed epoch of Buddhist supremacy in Hindostan), in company with that intricate square figure which when appearing on Greek works is denominated a *Labyrinth.* Other sectarian Marks are three paralled lines placed horizontally, or vertically, to denote their respective deities: others of truly Masonic aspect, are the wheel, crescent, heart, *vesica piscis*, all variously modified to express ritualistic differences. That the Gnostics borrowed many of these symbols directly from Buddhism,* adding them to their old stock of Egyptian devices, is apparent upon the inspection of any large collection of Abraxas gems. The lingering influence of this importation continually peep out where least to be expected. In the finest known MS. of the Apocalypse, the work of a French illuminator about the middle of the thirteenth century (in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge), the most elaborate of all its decorations is the heading to chapter xiv., filling half a page. It represents "The Lamb standing upon Mount Zion," surrounded by the saints; above, is the Godhead, typified by an immense golden *Quatrefoil*, encompassed by the Four Beasts which bear the names of the Evangelists; at each side and below are the Four-and-twenty Elders, arranged in groups of six, eight, and ten Within the Quatrefoil is seen an empty throne covered with a cloth crossed by diagonal blue lines; in each diagonal so formed is painted in red a circle containing a point. This *geometrical* expression of the idea of the Deity, so opposed to the characteristic anthropomorphism of regular Gothic art, may perhaps have been inspired by the Manicheist spirit that still actuated the Southern French. But to go back to the source—in the

* Scythicus, the preceptor of Manes, is actually declared by Epiphanius to have picked up his novel ideas during his visits to India as a trader from Alexandria.

Chinese system, *Yang*, the Male, Active, Principle has for his own possession, the Sun, Fire, and all the higher phenomena of Nature: to him belong the uneven numbers. *Yn*, the Female, Passive, Principle, possesses the Earth, Moon, and the even numbers. The same notion as to the sexes of Numbers was taught by Pythagoras, and by the Gnostic Marcus, after him. *Yang* is represented by the circle, *Yn* by the square, the two Forces combined, by two interlaced circles, ⚭, the actual badge of the Mediæval Vehm-Gerichte.

Having thus briefly noticed our Masonic Symbols, let us proceed to consider the society itself, and here a circumstance of the utmost importance to this inquiry must always be kept in view: the Freemasons, as at present organised into a mystic fraternity, derive their name from nothing but an *accidental* circumstance belonging to their first establishment. It was in the Common Hall of the London Guild of the Freemasons (the trade) that their first meetings were held, under Christopher Wren for president, in the time of the Commonwealth.* Their real object was political—the restoration of Monarchy—hence the exclusion of the public, and the oath of secrecy enjoined upon the members. The pretence of promoting the study of architecture, and the choice of the place where to hold their meetings, suggested by the profession of their president, were no more than blinds to deceive the existing government. There is a curious analogy to all this in the history of another famous society, the Neapolitan *Carbonari*, which similarly derived its name, terminology and insignia from the accidental circumstances under which it was created. Like Wren's associates, the first Carbonari were defeated Royalists and fanatical Republicans joined in unnatural union by one common hatred of the powers that be—the old Bourbonists equally with the chimerical founders of the shortlived "Parthenopean Republic," equally forced to flee for their lives to the mountains, the former to escape the well-deserved vengeance of the French under Murat, the latter so fiercely persecuted by Cardinal

* In April, 1646, when Ashmole was admitted member. Others named as present on that occasion were Lilly the astrologer, Dr. Pearson, the two Whartons, Hewitt, and Oughtred the mathematician.

Ruffo upon the first restoration of royalty at Naples. These desperate men, lurking about in the Abruzzi forests, were forced to assume the disguise of the only inhabitants of these wild regions, the *carbonari*, charcoal-burners, as the best means of eluding pursuit. After their forces had grown to a regular confederation, the disguise, so suggestive and terror inspiring, was retained for a *uniform;* a charcoal-sack was the badge of membership, a charcoal-measure the throne of the President, and their conclaves were held by rule in the midnight forest. When Ferdinand, "the Well-beloved," was firmly seated on his ancient throne, for the third and last time, his diligent eradication of his former friends, the Constitutionals, folks almost equally crazed with the original "Parthenopean" patriots, sent thousands of exiles to swell the ranks of the Carbonari. Soon the society was able to establish ramifications all over Italy, thanks to the paternal government of the Austrians and their *protégés*, the various restored princes of the Bourbon and Este lines; and thus in our own times *Carbonaro* and *Liberal* came to mean pretty nearly the same thing; and the Italian "Carbonaro" to know no more about charcoal-burning than the English "Mason" does about building.

But although this Society of Freemasons was convoked in London, and established branches all over England, furnishing also the members with the means for secret recognition, and all for a political end, yet in its true origin Freemasonry had nothing political in its nature, neither was the aforesaid convocation in London the real commencement of its existence. This final organisation was only the adaptation to a special end of another society, then in fullest bloom, the *Rosicrucian.* If we reflect how rankly both astrology and alchemy were flourishing at that time in England,* and that the Rosicrucian sect was essentially of *Protestant* growth, we may on good grounds conclude that this sect already numbered many English members from amongst the educated classes and the philosophers of the

* Oxford produced the two great lights of the Hermetic philosophy, Robert de Fluctibus (Fludd), and his contemporary Eugenius Philaethes (Thos. Vaughan). The latter, born in 1612, is said by a writer of the year 1749 to be then living at Nuremberg, as the president of the *illuminated* throughout the world.

day. These last were for the most part ardent Royalists, hating the established order of things, joined with many fanatical Republicans equally impatient of the new despotism of Cromwell. In the Rosicrucian system Religion and Philosophy, the latter meaning little more than astrology and alchemy,* were strangely interwoven, and the terminology of the one was borrowed to express the ideas and aspirations of the other. This hypothesis is strongly recommended from its adoption by the acute De Quincey in his essay entitled "Freemasons and Rosicrucians" ('London Magazine,' 1824), where he shows how the Rosicrucians, when driven by persecution out of Germany, re-appeared in England as Freemasons, taking that name from the place of meeting, and from nothing else. Under the new appellation the sect was re-imported into the Continent as an *English* institution. De Quincey, however, makes their object to have been purely religious without any admixture of politics, and so far differs from Nicolai, whose views have been adopted by myself in what precedes, and who, being himself an *illuminato* of the first water, ought certainly to be regarded as the higher authority of the two.

The latter writer has given in his 'Tempel-Herren' what appears to be the best supported account of the rise† and progress of Rosicrucianism. He points out for its founder a Lutheran mystic, J. V. Andreæ,‡ almoner to the Duke of

* The position of the latter science in this century cannot be more strongly exemplified than by the actual existence of current coins declaring themselves to be made out of Hermetic metal by the symbols for mercury and lead (♈ ♄) stamped on their reverse. Examples are three ducats of Gustavus Adolphus (Paris Cabinet), thalers of Wilhelm, Landgrave of Hesse, and contemporary coins of the city of Erfurt. This subject has been well handled by Martin Reg in his memoir, "Anciennes Pièces Hermétiques," 'Revue Numismatique' for 1867.

† 'The Rosicrucians: their Rites and Mysteries; with Chapters on the ancient Fire-and-Serpent Worshippers, and explanations of the Mystic Symbols represented in the Monuments and Talismans of the Primæval Philosophers.' By Hargrave Jennings, London, 1870. A truly "Masonic" production, without "method in its madness," but valuable for giving many Rosicrucian (or rather Kabbalistic) expositions of symbols, extracted from Fludd's writings. The compiler has, moreover, laid my 'Gnostics' largely under contribution, and even reproduced my engravings with sundry fanciful improvements that wonderfully heighten their mystic value.

‡ Solomon Sember, however, in

Würtemberg early in the seventeenth century. At least, the writings of this divine, wherein the *Rosy Cross* prominently figures were the first indications that made the existence of the fraternity known to the outer world. But Andreæ appears to have done no more than borrow the symbols and occult means of communication already existing from time immemorial amongst the astrologers and alchemists (in other words the wealthy and the learned of the age, when the Emperor Rudolf II. was the greatest patron of the "curious arts" ever recorded in history) in order to employ them on the furtherance of a visionary scheme of his own. This scheme was the fusion of all Christian sects * into one universal brotherhood, and the projector wisely commenced his apostleship by attempting to bring over to his side the most eminent of the mass, by the utilization of such ancient and venerated machinery. The well-meaning enthusiast had evidently disregarded the remark of the sagacious Julian (Am. Mar. xxi. 5), confirmed as it is by the experience of every succeeding generation, owes as much as any; "Nullas infestas hominibus bestias ut sunt sibi ferales plerique Christianorum." As a matter of course, his scheme of universal brotherhood dissolved in smoke as soon as established, but the older philosophy, whose garb he had adopted, bloomed with fresh vigour under the new organisation and euphonious name.

But before going any further, let us for diversion's sake hear the Rosicrucians' own story, and examine some of their doctrines and insignia, which have an important bearing upon the subject of our inquiry. The Rosicrucians, says Boyle, make their founder to have been a certain German, only known as A. C., who having gone to Damascus in the year 1387, was instructed in their mysteries by the *College of Arabian Sages* †

his 'Collections for the History of Rosicrucianism,' assigns a fabulous antiquity to the sect.

* Exactly the same scheme, based upon Judaism, is the crime that now keeps in perpetual imprisonment Nicholas Ilvin, the far-famed "Convent Spectre" of Solovetsk in the Frozen Sea, universally believed in Russia to be the lost Grand Duke Constantine.–(Dixon's 'Free Russia.')

† This tradition may have some truth in it, allowing for an error of locality. At *Cairo* the Fatemite sultans (Ismaelites be it remembered) had three centuries before this date

there established. Returning home he communicated his knowledge to a small number of chosen associates, dying in 1484. It is a matter of importance to notice that in this legend Syria is made the fountain head of the new philosophy. The Rosicrucian Creed, according to the 'Essay on Spirits' (dedicated to Mr. Locke, 1647), contains, amongst others, this palpable adoption of the Pythagorean system :—

> "Ante omnia Punctum extitit, non mathematicum, sed diffusivum extrinsicæ Monados, intrinsicæ Myriados; omnia et nihil; Est et Non.
>
> Haec Monas commovebat se in Dyadas, et per Triadas egressæ sunt facies luminis secundi.
>
> Hic respiciens superiorem et inferiorem Parentem, iisdem deinde protulit Vultum Triformem."

In the second paragraph Clarkson* discovers an allusion to the Vesica Piscis, which is in truth a figure generated by two circles intersecting at their respective centres; and for the same reason, the secret sign of the Brethren of the Vehme-Gerichte was the two annular links of a chain. The Egg formed by *three* intersecting circles, contains in its upper section seven triangles, and as many in its lower section, which are the opposing genii of Light and Darkness. This was the *idol* which the Manichæans were accused of worshipping on the charges brought against them by the Popes (Clarkson, p. 20). Still more does the "Vultus Triformis" of this Creed arrest our attention as bearing a more than accidental affinity to the triple-faced idol, the adoration whereof was so persistently laid to the charge of the Templars—the real meaning of which accusa-

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founded the far-famed lodge, entitled "the House of Wisdom." Here the student passed through *nine degrees*, beginning with Obedience, Mysticism, Philosophy, Doubt, &c., up to Absolute Incredulity. William of Tyre (xix. 17) tells a wonderful story, how Hugo of Cæsarea and Geffroi of the Temple, envoys to Cairo on business of the Order, were led by the Soldan himself to the palace Kashef, and conducted through numerous courts of the richest architecture, full of strange birds and beasts, to the inmost hall, where the Soldan having first adored the unseen "Master," the curtains of gold and pearl were suddenly drawn back, and that dignitary appeared seated in unspeakable glory on a golden throne, attended by his chief officials.

* 'The Symbolical Evidence of the Temple Church. Were the Templars Gnostics?'

tion shall be investigated in its proper place. This same "tête d'un homme monstrueuse," image of "le Dieu qui ne meurt pas," so often mentioned in the confessions of the Knights, may be recognised beyond all mistake in the hideous head with flaring hair and beard, and eyes wide open, as if just severed from the body, placed upon a box inscribed X. P. S., which repeatedly occurs amongst the Rosicrucian pictures in the Diary of Hosea Lux. This MS., the most remarkable of the kind extant, or ever composed, written between the years 1568 and 1612, is full of mystic drawings, beautifully done in pen and ink, which may be either prophetic hieroglyphs, or else enshroud the *arcana* of some seeker after the Elixir of Life: the latter it would rather seem, to judge from the perpetual introduction of certain *very significant* emblems. The author must have belonged (as an actual Mason assures me) to a Lodge of Templars, as is proved by his use of the "hand in hand" and "foot to foot" insignia. As exhibiting the whole list of the present Masonic signs, but employed for Rosicrucian purposes, at so early a date, this Diary is of the utmost value to the history of the Order.* To quote a few of the most important embellishments of these mystic pages: the same "Baphometic" Head appears in another place set on a box inscribed with "Solomon's Seal," containing a retort: over the head is a disk, set all round dial fashion but with hearts instead of numerals; in the field is written the opposite motto "Timore et tremore." Another is picture presents the Head hovering above the Ark of the Covenant, all enclosed within the outline of a *heart* out of whose aorta issues a naked boy bearing a flaming star and crescent conjoined. Yet more mysterious is the heart containing T over a bell resting upon a star: above all, for a crest is set Solomon's Seal; for supporters to the shield, his pillars Jachin and Boaz, flanked on the right by that King seated, on the left by a naked man standing, who pierces the heart with a long rod. Singular, too, is the man with uplifted hands, having instead of a face Solomon's Seal enclosing a retort. Other symbols

* Through the kindness of the present owner, Mr. J. E. Hodgkin, F.S.A., I have had opportunity to make a minute examination of the MS.

frequently occurring on these pictures are the naked boy extended on the spokes of a wheel; or again placed upon an egg set in a candlestick: the king's bust crowned with the winged crescent (on which the merest novice in alchemy can discern the allusion to *regulus* of antimony and *quicksilver*): the egg containing a circle whence issue rays of light; probably typifying the *crucible*, for another heading shows the same figure within a furnace with the infant *metal* springing rapturously from its womb; the five links of a chain interlaced: all these being Rosicrucian emblems now embalmed in the repertory of the Freemasons. These drawings, besides their artistic value with respect to their fertile invention and incredibly minute finish (Lux being a copper-plate engraver of some eminence), are highly interesting as pictorial exponents of the Hermetic philosophy still so flourishing at the time of their execution. Of such designs, nothing can surpass in elaborate execution and impenetrable mystery the large drawing of the naked female standing upon musical notes, holding in her right a torch tipped with a beautiful face whence issue flames; an owl perched upon her extended left hand; on her breast for brooch Sol's head in a crescent. Upon a pedestal is set a tall long-necked alembic containing the most obvious emblem of the generative power, emitting upwards the stream of Life, which is caught into the mouth of a cherub whose hair forms a bunch of flowers supporting the before-mentioned disk of hearts, whilst his hand holds forth a wheatsheaf. In the field lies a crown over a marshal's bâton shaped like a phallas. Another drawing full of interest is the portrait of a man in a fur cap with plume, wearing round his neck a pendant inscribed like the jewel of the G. A., from which again is hung a human foot; with his right hand he points to a crescent divided into three parts enclosing X. A. P., his left rests on the head of a mighty hammer. De Quincey, in the above quoted essay, describes a manuscript work by Simon Stadion, of Würtemberg, written in the year 1604, under the title, "Naometria, seu nuda et prima Libri intus et foris scripti Expositio, et Prognosticticus." It is a series of dreams and prophecies based upon the Apocalypse: in which he speaks of "Stellæ matutinæ ductu anno 1572 con-

spectæ"; and constantly brings in the Rose and Cross, on which account he is generally supposed to have been a Rosicrucian. Martin Luther also took for his seal the Rose and Cross; some deep religious significance, at the time well understood, must have recommended the device to the choice of the "Tertius Elias."

Besides these obligations to the Rosicrucians, the London Freemasons also borrowed much of their phraseology from Lord Bacon's work, still fresh in men's minds, in which, adopting the idea of the "House of Wisdom," a technical term with the Arab astrologers, he proposed the foundation of a "Solomon's House," or learned community dedicated to the cultivation of experimental philosophy and the advancement of science. These philosophic and royalist plotters, in order to cloak the true nature of their proceedings, conducted, their conclaves according to the rules prescribed by Bacon: and the same ceremonial and nomenclature they carefully maintain to the present day.

A final and demonstrative proof of the recent and *English* origin of Freemasonry is afforded by the dates of institution of the various Foreign Lodges, which are by their own profession branches of the parent Society in London. The Parisian was not founded until the year 1725, the Madrid in 1728, and the Florentine in 1733. And yet France and Italy had been the birthplace of the actual *art* of masonry, and the scene of the full glory of its revival.

Another important fact remains to be noticed, the *Rosicrucians* still subsist amongst the Parisian Freemasons as the designation for their highest degree (to be conferred upon distinguished English visitors), although all disclaim those mystics as being the parent stock; inasmuch as that truth, if allowed, were utterly incompatible with their own claim to immemorial antiquity. Nevertheless, they loudly profess to trace their descent through the line of the Templars down from that splendidly fabulous origin they arrogate to themselves.

But to return to Andreæ, and the honour Nicolai assigns him as the creator of the immediate parent of modern Freemasonry,

certain it is that his far-famed Rosy Cross had been ages before the regular badge of the Knights Templars. Considering how widely the Order had spread its branches, obtained possession and affiliated to itself multitudes both male and female amongst the laity all over Europe, it would be a mere absurdity to believe that all its traditions were swept away at one stroke by the suppression of the Templars in the year 1307.* In fact, the Parisian *Templiers,* as the most important division of the French Freemasons still style themselves, pretend to have kept up the succession of Grand Masters unbroken; nay more, to have preserved the archives of the Order ever since that date. François I. is even reported to have burnt alive, with a contrivance of refined cruelty in "The fiery bath," four unfortunate gentlemen convicted of being Templars,† which, if true, suffices to prove the existence of that fraternity down to a period but little removed from the public manifestation of the Rosicrucians. Truly was he by such proceedings "semina odii in longum jaciens," to borrow the forcible simile of Tacitus, if we are to believe Barruel's express declaration that Spartacus Weishaupt's *Jacobins* did no more than pay to royalty the so long deferred legacy of revenge handed down to them by generation after generation of secret societies—fulfilling the last Templar's solemn vow of vengeance against Philippe le Bel, and all future kings in his person. By order of the same François I., his general Almeida, extirpated with a cruelty unusual even in those times the remnant of the Albigenses still lurking in the villages of Provence, a sect, it should be remembered, of genuine Manichæans, transplanted thither from the East at a comparatively recent date. As Manichæans, they would naturally have preserved the symbols, and tokens for mutual recognition so much in vogue, as history and existing monuments attest,

* Even the sceptical Michelet allows "il est possible que les Templiers qui échappèrent se soient fondus en sociétés secrètes. En Écosse ils disparaissent tous excepté deux. Or, on a remarqué que les plus secrets mystères dans la Franc-maçonnerie sont réputés émaner d'Écosse, et que les hauts grades y sont nommes Écossais. V. Grouvelle et les écrivains qu'il a suivis.'—('Hist. de France,' iii. p. 129.)

† Communicated to me by a 'Brother'; the historical authority I cannot discover.

amongst all followers of the Gnosis. And such machinery and grown yet more into articles of necessity, after continued persecution had transformed their congregations into regular secret societies.

But dismissing all such speculations, we are under no necessity for connecting the Rosicrucians with the ancient Brethren of the Temple, in order to account for their display of the Gnostic symbols which figure so conspicuously in Andreae's plates, and which have since been so diligently illustrated (though often with erroneous ingenuity) by Von Hammer in his 'Mystery of Baphomet Revealed;' yet even his *misinterpreted* examples go to prove the same truth, and his 'Baphometic Idols,' whose adoration should have been the heaviest count in the charges against the Templars (though unmistakably of Cinque-cento design and workmanship), are astrological and cabbalistic sigils breathing a purely *Rosicrucian* spirit in their syncretism of symbolic forms. For there is one point in these sculptures alone sufficient to upset all Von Hammer's elaborate structure—the Arabic legends, being cut in current Neshki characters, betray their modern manufacture; for had they been contemporary with the flourishing times of the Templars, the primitive Cufic must, as a matter of course, have been employed Yet, at the same time, these same legends indicate clearly enough the fountain-head of the doctrines held in common by all similar fraternities.

But before considering this last and so important point, the subject will be more conveniently approached by our first considering the principal arguments set forth by the learned Orientalist in support of his theory. His object in truth is sufficiently declared by the title of his treatise, 'Mysterium Baphometis Revelatum: seu Fratres militiæ Templi quà Gnostici et quidem Ophiani, apostasiæ, idololatriæ, et quidem impuritatis convicti per ipsa eorum monumenta" (published in the *Mines de l'Orient*, vol. vi.). The treatise is copiously illustrated with fine copper plates of magical statuettes, architectural ornaments, mystical inscriptions, vases, and coins. As regards *historical* evidence, the main foundation of his hypothesis rests upon certain heads in the Articles of Accusation against the

Templars, despatched by Pope Clement V. to all archbishops, &c. These are—

"*Art.* 42. Item, quod ipsi per singulas provincias habeant Idola, videlicet *capita*,* quorum aliqua habebant *tres facies*, et alia unam, et aliqua *cranium* humanum habebant.

"*Art.* 54. Item, quod aliquod caput illorum cingebant seu tangebant chordulis quibus si ipsos cingebant, circa camiciam seu carnem.

"*Art.* 55. Quod in hac receptione, singulis fratribus prædictæ chordulæ tradebantur, vel aliæ longitudinis earum."

In this girding with a consecrated string there is a striking analogy to the *Kosti* † prescribed by the Zoroastrian religion, still assumed by every Parsee upon his initiation (which takes place upon his completing his *seventh* year), and thenceforth constantly worn over the shirt. This distinctive badge was the most likely of all to be retained by Manes (himself a Magian) in his Christianised modification of the Persian creed. Other articles, unnecessary to quote, allege the permission and even the obligation of unnatural practices. But, from the very beginning, this last accusation, so needless to be proved, because so readily believed, has been brought against the members of all secret societies, as Ovid shows by the popular tradition respecting Orpheus, the acknowledged founder of the Grecian mysteries.

> "Illetiam Thracum populis fuit auctor amorem
> In teneros transferre mares, citraque juventam,
> Ætatis breve ver et primos carpere flores."‡ (Metam. x. 83–85).

Clarkson has more recently discussed the same question in his very ingenious essay 'Upon the Symbolical Evidence of the Temple Church. Were the Templars Gnostic Idolaters as

* Such a head of silver was actually seized in the Parisian Chapter-house; but the Templars passed it off for a reliquary containing the skull of one of the 11,000 virgins, in spite of the long beard with which it was furnished (Rayn. p. 299). Another is said to have been found elsewhere bearing the numeral LIII. These damning evidences would naturally have been made away with by the Templars upon the first alarm of the inquiry.

† Woven out of *seven* threads by the wife of the *Mobed* or fire-priest.

‡ "Dum erat juvenis sæcularis, omnes pueri clamabant publice et vulgariter unus ad alterum, Custodiatis vobis ab osculo Templariorum" Wilkins, *Conc. Britann.* ii. p. 360).

alleged?' He endeavours to prove their Manicheism by means of *architectural* evidence, deduced from the members of the edifice and the geometrical relations discoverable in the ground plan. But, dispassionately considered, such arguments are of little weight, inasmuch as they could be found, if looked for (under a similar prepossession), in many other buildings, both mediæval and modern, having no connection whatsoever with the Brethren of the Temple. Again, a fatal objection to his theory is the fact, that all such "Round Churches" are acknowledged copies of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, which, whether Helena's original building, or merely a Gothic reconstruction by the Frankish kings (the more probable explanation), was certainly not subjected to Templar influence in the laying out of its plan. The circular, domical shape had been given by Helena to her church simply because that form, according to the Roman notion handed down from Etruscan antiquity, was regarded as most appropriate for a *tomb*. Hence, to go no further back, it was adopted for Helena's own sepulchre (*Torre pignatara*), and for that of her grandchild, Constantia. In illustration of his hypothesis Clarkson adduces the statement of Clemens Alexandrinus about the "Primary Elements" of the old Egyptians, and *supposes* them to have been the *square*, the *angle*, the *semicircle*, the *circle*, the *oval*, the *line*, the *waved line*, *triangular*, and *the cross*. These would represent the seven primary consonants, of which the invention was attributed to Memnon, viz., the letters with their equivalent sounds, B, C, D, L, M, N, S. Should this theory have any truth in it, the frequent introduction of such figures into talismanic inscriptions obtains a satisfactory explanation.

But it is now full time to return to Von Hammer's Baphometic Idols, and his profound interpretations of their figures and inscriptions. It is obvious at the first glance that the idea of most of them was suggested by the Roman Jupiter Hercules, or Silenus (classical types, by the way, entirely unknown to the art of the 12th and 13th centuries); their heads, or rather their faces, are *triple*, eyes and ears are plenteously distributed all over the body, which is moreover adorned with planetary signs. Our author sets them down without hesitation as the

actual figures of the "Old Man" adored by the Knights, described so persistently by the witnesses against them as "une ydole avec *trois faces.*"* The same statuettes are for the most part girded with serpents, whose heads they hold in their mouths, or in various distorted attitudes, amply sufficient grounds for Von Hammer to connect them with the Ophite mysteries. But this very attribute, together with the numerous eyes studding the body, would rather seem to betray an acquaintance in the sculptor with similar Hindoo creations—Indra, the eye-bespangled god of the firmament, for example. Similar fancies had found their way even into the Cinque-cento dress; Queen Elizabeth is painted in a gown thus embellished. Some, again, of these figures carry the Egyptian Tau (*marculus*, Masonic *Knocker*) conspicuously suspended from the neck. But, as already hinted, the artistic composition of these well-executed monstrosities, and the classical *motives* everywhere peeping out in their outlines, seem altogether foreign to the quaint simplicity of early mediæval art.

The three "Baptismal Vases," or *Fonts*, on which he lays so much stress, are nothing but little stone cups six inches high at the utmost, covered with bas-reliefs, the phallic character whereof would seem to point to their employment in the brewing of the Elixir of Life from its most obvious ingredients. The second of these reliefs, explained as denoting the "Baptism of Fire," does in truth recall to our recollection the "Twelve Tortures" of the Mithraic rock-tablets; for it exhibits a naked boy holding various instruments—the axe, lyre, bucket of Anubis—whilst another, blowing a horn, feeds the fire in a furnace. Of the third vase, however, the decoration savours strongly of Judaism, representing the lifting up of the Brazen Serpent, though the female reclining below appears rather to

* "Car tantôt après ils alloient adorer une *Idole*, et pour certain icelle idole était une vielle peau, ainsi comme toute embaumée, et comme toile polie; et illecques certès le Templier mettoit sa tres vile foy et croyance; et en lui tres fermement croyoient. Et en icelle avoit ès fosses des yeux escarboncles reluisants comme clarté du ciel; et pour certain toute leur esperance étoit en icelle, et étoit leur Dieu souverain, et mêmement se affioit en lui de bon cœur" (Art. 3. Vie de Philippe le Bel, chap. 66. 'Chronique de S. Denys').

caress the living reptile that encircles her, than to be alarmed at its embrace; whilst the Candlestick of the Tabernacle, which the second female is quenching from a vase at the bidding of Von Hammer's "Mete," personified as a regular Dutch Solomon, but with uplifted hands whence drop off chains, all betray the same source of inspiration. Bacchic and sidereal symbols, amongst which the phallus of course predominates, are plentifully strewn over the field. But the Arabic legends in the *modern* lettering, in this case, equally with the classical air of the design in the second, suffice to convince the sober archæologist that all three vases are nothing more than a portion of the paraphernalia of those Rosicrucian or alchemical quacks, who fattened upon the credulity of that arch-virtuoso, Rudolf II., ever since whose reign these "fonts" have been treasured up in the Imperial Cabinet. A sufficient notion of Von Hammer's mode of explaining these monuments is afforded by his interpretation of the Arabic inscription upon the scroll displayed in the hands of his "Mete" (according to him the Ophite *Sophia*), a female yet bearded figure whose sex is ostentatiously revealed to view: "Exaltatur Mete germinans, stirps nostra Ego et Septem fuere. Tu es unus Renegantium. Reditus πρωκτὸς fit."

The Baphometic idol, that "Head of the Old Man," which makes so fearful a figure in the Articles of Accusation, reminds one of the crowned Osiris seen in front face, otherwise that terminal figure often to be found cut on certain large green jaspers, which differ widely in style from the true Gnostic talismans dating from the Lower Empire, but rather have something about them bespeaking a mediæval and Arabian origin. For example, Raspe* gives a gem (No. 588) with "God the Father" crowned with five stars, and several barbarous characters. Reverse, a square, a sphere, a pentagon of Pythagoras, and several astrological and geometrical figures. Such a talisman was lately found in the tomb of a *Knight Templar* which was opened in Germany. And here it may be parenthetically observed, that our Freemasons, in order to give a better colour to their pretence of descent from the Templars, perpetually talk of them as the greatest *builders* of their times,

* 'Descriptive Catalogue of Engraved Gems.'

and as the best patrons of the *subordinate* body of working masons. Nothing can be more baseless than this assertion. The Order invested its wealth in a far more profitable manner than in stone and mortar, and really did nothing in the way of architecture, if compared with the great monastic Orders of the same period. In proof of this, notwithstanding its enormous possessions in England, no more than *four* churches were built for "Temples."

Von Hammer, amongst the numerous examples he has so indefatigably collected, presents many of a nature seemingly quite antagonistic to Catholic art, and of truly Gnostic and Oriental character. Conspicuous amongst them are the Three Vases, already described, in which he discovers examples of the true "Sangraal," that mystic cup which shines so brightly forth in the early romances of chivalry, the quest thereof being the highest adventure proposed in the *Morte d'Arthur*; perfect chastity being the indispensable condition for attaining unto the sight of the miraculous vessel. And in truth the decoration of these mystic fonts, used in the "Baptism of *Mete*" (the Gnostic Wisdom), whence their title "Baphometic," furnishes a very plausible foundation for the charges our author brings against their *supposed* inventors. But as for the obscene sculptures taken from the Templar churches, which he refers to the rites of the *Venus Mascula* celebrated therein, these are to be found in equal abundance and shamelessness amongst the carvings of other churches totally unconnected with the Order; for example, notably at Arcueil, near Paris. Such sculptures either contain a moral grossly expressed, according to the taste of their barbarous age, the censure of some particular vice, or may be no more than the ebullition of the brutal humour of the beery artist. But the gravest error into which this too sagacious interpreter has fallen is the attempt to identify the heresy of the Templar with the *Ophite*—that primitive form of the Gnosis, swallowed up so many ages before the foundation of the Order, in the overwhelming flood of Manicheism; a flood indeed that may, even at its source, Syria, have carried away as many inquiring spirits amongst the Knights, as it was simultaneously intoxicating in Italy and Provence. A great absurdity, too, is

the building up his grand hypothesis upon the inexplicable "Mete," which he finds out for himself in these unintelligible legends, seeing that the Archaic Μῆτις was never used in Gnostic times as synonymous with Σοφία, *Achamoth*, an identity nevertheless taken for granted in his argument. And by the same rules does Von Hammer explain the Masons' marks that he has collected, although they in no wise differ from others found in mediæval buildings of every conceivable destination and origin.

Before quitting this part of the subject, a word must be said upon other etymologies that have been proposed for the mighty word "Baphomet." One, equally consistent with Von Hammer's views, and much more so with the genius of the Byzantine language, would be βαφὴ Μητρός, "Baptism of the *Mother*," that special designation of Barbelo in the Valentinian theology.* Such Greek technical phrases *may* have been perpetuated in the Manichean ritual, wherever, and however late, it was introduced into France.

Another explanation makes Baphomet the corruption of *Behemoth*, meaning the golden calves Opis and Mnevis, whose bones were exhibited to their worshippers, set out upon the lid of the coffin. So in later times were the bones of Manes displayed for the adoration of his followers; and those of the G.M. Hiram,† according to report, at the initiation of a Templar. Hence came the *Death's Head* and *Coffin*, that figure so conspicuously at the Carbonari Conclaves, and the cognate engine of terror at our Masonic receptions, when the candidate for admission "being brought to the G.P. receives that sudden and awful impression on his mind that cannot fail to have the desired effect: a part of the ceremony that ought to be well attended to, as well for the *honour* and *safety* of the new-made brother, as of the Fraternity at large." But to return to etymology. Visconti is probably in the right after all, in considering "Baphometa" no deeper mystery that the French corruption of the name "Mahomet," as repeated by the ignorant witnesses for the prosecution.

* Which made her the *heavenly* mother of the Saviour.

† Being set upon a coffin containing a corpse, elevated upon a catafalque of five steps (Clarkson).

But although the fanciful Orientalist has pushed this theory to an unwarrantable and even ludicrous extent, yet proved facts, coupled with probabilities, will induce the unprejudiced inquirer to acquiesce in the conclusions of the judicious Raspe. "The Gnosis of Basilides was an *occult science* which, according to his tenets, should be known only and communicated to one in thousands, and to two in ten thousands, and that if the Knights Templars were guilty of any offence at the time of their extermination, it was that of having adopted the doctrines of the Gnostics, and consequently of having renounced the established doctrine of the Church on the human nature of Christ, and on the Trinity: in the place of which they, with the Gnostics, professed one Supreme Being, Father and Creator of all the Powers which, emanating from him, have created and do govern this world. At their reception or initiation into the *highest degree* of the Order they received *βαφὴ μήτους*, or *μήτιος*—that is to say, the *Baptism* or *Tincture* of *Wisdom;* they were presented with a sign or *symbol* of their baptism, which was the Pentagon of Pythagoras; and they worshipped a kind of *image* or *idol*; that like the Abraxas or this gem was the figure of a Bearded Old Man, or rather the representation of the only Supreme Being that they admitted and professed." The gem referred to is a jasper (Townley) presenting: "Abraxas, the Sun, or God-Father, or Demiurgus according to the Gnostics and necromancers. This head is crowned, the beard long, the hands crossed upon the breast: for the rest, he is formed as a Term, or a mummy. In the field are eight stars, probably an allusion to the eight Powers, or heavens, that are subordinate to them, according to Epiphanius. In the field are two Hebrew letters, ת ה.

"Reverse. The same God the Father, or Abraxas, in the same attitude, standing above four angels placed upon a sphere and receiving his emanations; in the field are three, on the sphere are five stars. There are besides in the field two Hebrew letters, three lines of inscription, &c."

Figures of unquestionably mediæval workmanship do, however, exist, which would have stood Von Hammer (had he known of them) in far better stead than the easily recognisable legacies

of Rudolf II. and his Rosicrucian quacks. Such is the brass statuette published by Caylus (Rec. d'antiq. v. Pl., 32) representing a man in tight jerkin and hose (as worn under armour), but head covered with a jester's horned hood. Upon his belly is emblazoned a blazing sun; he is girt with the broad knightly belt, engraved all round with planetary signs, and regular Masons' Marks; which also run round the edge of the tripod upon which he stands. The figure, about five and a half inches high, extends both hands with the palms uppermost, and these are pierced with holes for the reception of the supports of some vessel, probably a magician's lamp. Amongst other devices engraved on the trunk, most conspicuous are the eagle, serpent, and crucible supporting a retort. Caylus places his drawing of it amongst his Egyptian monuments, but reasonably enough distrusting such an origin for the inscriptions, suggests, with no better reason, that the work belongs to Persia.

Manicheism has been so repeatedly referred to in the foregoing pages, as to make it necessary to give a brief explanation of the way, in which that strange creed may possibly have affected the religion of the Templars. And here, all is either assertion of enemies, or modern theory; hardly any monuments remaining that can be with certitude attributed to the Manicheans, though so numerous in their time, for they had drawn within their own circle every older form of Gnosticism in the interval between Constantine and Justinian. This deficiency is partly due to the fast increasing barbarism of those ages, which produced nothing in the way of art, however degraded. Their sole religious monuments were sacred books, prayers, spells, committed to perishable materials, parchment, papyrus, diligently sought out and destroyed by every persecutor. The extirpation of Gnosticism was vigorously prosecuted by the later emperors of the West, and by those of the East, Arian equally with Catholic. In this pious career the first step was made by Magnus Maximus, the British usurper under Gratian, by putting to death Priscillian, bishop of Avila, and his chief adherents, in spite of the very *unsaintly* remonstrances of the good Martin of Tours. The usurper's punisher, Theodosius, also made Manicheism (Priscillian's crime) a capital offence, his

edict being the first *statutable* infraction of the old Roman principle of universal religious toleration. In the reign of his son, Epiphanius boasts of having brought about the exile of seventy women, some noble, through whose seductions he had himself at one time been drawn into joining the Marcosians. Such a vaunt leads to the suspicion that the renegade had saved himself by turning evidence against his fellow sectarians at the opening of the persecution. Or again, this absence of Manichean relics may be accounted for by the rigid character of the creed itself, the offspring of Magism, therefore regarding all imagery as idolatrous and sinful, a tenet latterly carried out to the fullest extent by the iconoclastic Albigenses.

To come now to the *second* diffusion of Manicheism over Europe. In the middle of the seventh century, under Constans II., Constantinus Sylvanus, a native of Samosata, broached that last and most far-spreading heresy, the *Paulician.* The name arose from his combination of the doctrine of St. Paul with that of Zoroaster, but he had intermingled a larger proportion of the former ingredient than his precursor Manes had thought fit to do in his original theosophy. The new teacher easily united into one church the remnants of the old Gnostics, especially the Manicheans of Armenia, and the still unconverted Zoroastrians of Pontus and Cappadocia. Incessantly persecuted by the Byzantine powers, their chief Carbeas founded a new capital for his sect, the impregnable Tephrice, in the mountains near Trebizond; but which was ultimately destroyed by Basil the Macedonian about the year A.D. 880. But in the middle of the preceding century, the irreligious Constantine Copronymus had transplanted a large colony of these Armenian Paulicians into the depopulated Thrace, where their numbers were largely augmented in the tenth century by a fresh reinforcement drawn from the Chalybian Hills and planted in the valleys of Mount Haemus by John Zimisces. Here their missionaries converted the neighbouring pagans, the Bulgarians, whence the sect derived a new and more odious appellation, one which in course of time from denoting heresy in religion was fixed to the branding of heresy in love. Warlike and fearless of death, we find these Paulicians serving in

the Byzantine armies, notably in those of Alexius Comnenus in his wars with the Normans of Sicily. From this island as a focus they diffused their doctrines over Italy, they gained numerous converts even at Rome and Milan, but spread with still more astonishing rapidity through the South of France. Persons even whose interests were diametrically opposed to the progress of the sect, joined it with inexplicable fervour; twelve canons of the Cathedral of Orléans were burnt alive at one time for embracing Paulicianism. These few facts, selected from the wide range of their history, will suffice to illustrate the diffusion of Manichean notions during the period when the Templars were at the height of their prosperity and power.

But Gnosticism in one shape or other, was still surviving in the very head-quarters of the Order, amongst their closest allies or enemies, the mountaineers of Syria. The Templar-Order had been modelled after an original, the last to be looked for according to modern views, for Von Hammer has here been successful in demonstrating that its constitution is a servile copy of that of the detested "Assassins." The statutes of the latter prove the fact beyond all gainsaying; they were found upon the captives of their capital, Alamoot, by the Mogul, Halakoo, in the year 1335, when by a most singular coincidence, Caliph and Pope were busied in exterminating the model and the copy in the East and West, at one and the same time. From these documents were verified the "Eight Degrees" of initiation as established by Hassan, the first Grand Master or "Prince of the Mountain." These degrees, probably suggested by the ancient Mithraic tests, were:—

I. The Trial of knowledge.

II. The Trial of Persuasiveness; *i.e.*, the talent for proselytism.

III. Denial of the truth of the Koran, and of all other sacred scriptures.

IV. The Trial of silent and perfect obedience.

V. The Disclosure of the names of the Great Brothers of the Order, royal, sacerdotal and patrician, *in all parts of the world.*

VI. The Confirmation of all the preceding steps of knowledge.

VII. The Allegorical interpretation of the Koran, and of all

other scriptures. In this lodge the divinity of all founders of religious systems was alike denied. Religion was shown to be a mere step to *knowledge*, its narratives to be merely allegorical and exhibiting the progress of civil society: thus, *Man's Fall* signified political slavery; *Redemption* his restoration to liberty and equality.

VIII. That all actions were indifferent, provided only they were done for the good of the Order; * there being no such thing, absolutely, as vice or virtue.

It will be seen that the principle running through these "Degrees" is identical with that pervading the main counts in the Articles of Accusation brought against the Templars.

The same author (*History of the Assassins*) shows that the organization of the Templars was exactly modelled upon that of the Assassins, and thus confronts the several degrees in each of the two orders.

Of the Assassins.

I. The Grand Master, or Prince of the Mountain.
II. The Dais-al-Kabir, or three great viceroys under him.
III. The Dais, or provincial masters.
IV. The Refek, or chaplains.
V. The Lazik, or military body.
VI. The Fedavee, or death-devoted.
VII. The Batinee, or secret brethren, *i.e.*, those affiliated to the order.

Of the Templars.

I. The Grand Master.
II. The three Grand Priors.
III. The Provincial Prior.
IV. The Chaplains.
V. The Knights.
VI. The Esquires.
VII. The Serving-brethren.
VIII. The Donati and Oblati.
IX. The Affiliati.†

* The maxim of the Jesuits "that implicit obedience includes the commission of a *mortal* sin."

† The benefits of affiliation were obtained at the small annual fee of two or three *deniers*. One of the

The "Donati" and Oblati" were sworn, in return for the protection afforded to them by the Order, to leave to it all their property at their deaths, and consequently to refrain from having offspring, or even to stand sponsors to the children of others. If married at the time of joining the Order, they were bound to put away their wives. Infraction of the vow was punished by perpetual imprisonment. The "Affiliati" had, probably, nothing to do with the secrets of the Order; they merely, in return for a certain sum paid down, received their daily maintenance (their *commons*) out of the corporate fund; such an arrangement being a simple anticipation of the principle of life annuities, and admirably suited to the requirements of those barbarous times.

It is not a matter for surprise that the grand elements of ancient Gnosticism should have thus been discovered lurking in the secret rules of the Order of Assassins; when the origin of that order is investigated, it proves to be only a branch of the Ismaelites, or those Persians who supported the cause of the descendants of Ali. But Abdallah, himself a *Magian*, had from the beginning founded in the midst of these Ismaelites, a secret society composed of those Persians who had, through Arab compulsion, embraced Mohammedanism only in name. By inculcating those vital dogmas of the old Gnosis, that *knowledge* was the real end of Religion, and that in all scriptures the *allegorical* interpretation was the only true one, Abdallah united under his teaching the remnants of all the older religions that still lurked in Persia, in fact he did in Persia under the Caliph, what the new Manichean Chrysocheir was doing at Tephrice under the Byzantine emperor. The Ismaelites having gradually become absorbed into the new sect, succeeded, in the tenth century, in placing a prince of Ali's line upon the throne of Cairo, thus founding the Fatimite dynasty. After this, Hassan, who had served with distinction under the Seljuk Sultans, aided by his brethren to when he had returned, having captured the hill fortress of Alamoot or 'The Vultures' Nest' (1090 A.D.), set himself up there as an independent prince, and established

chief causes of Philippe le Bel's hatred against the order was their refusal, in the early part of his reign to admit him into this class.

his community as a *political body*, under the constitution already described. In a short time these bold sectaries made themselves masters of all the strong places of Lebanon, thereby securing their independence of the Egyptian Caliph. The Druses are only the modern representatives of the suppressed Assassins. Like them, they are Ismaelites, their ostensible founder being Hakim, a Fatemite Caliph of Cairo, who professed himself the new incarnation of the Godhead. Their notion that the present seat of their ever absent Grand Master is *Europe*, tallies curiously enough with Von Hammer's theory about the close relationship that existed between the Templars and the actual progenitors of the Druses. These same Druses may also possibly represent the 'polytheists and Samaritans' who flourished so vigorously in the Lebanon as late as the times of Justinian, to whose persecuting zeal Procopius ascribes the extermination of a *million* inhabitants of that district alone. Of their present creed, preserved in unviolated secrecy, nothing authentic has ever come to light; popular belief amongst their neighbours makes them adorers of an idol in the form of a calf, and to celebrate their nocturnal assemblies, orgies like those laid to the charge of the Ophites in Roman, of the Templars in mediæval, and of the Freemasons (continental) in modern times. Their notion of their Head residing in *Scotland* has an odd resemblance to the German appellation "Scottish Brethren," given to our Masons. Some such association of ideas seems to have led the Lessing to maintain that "Freemason," in German *Masson*, has nothing whatever to do with the English meaning of the word, but comes from *mass* only, the proper name for a Templar lodge, called also a "Round Table." For this derivation he cites Agricola, an authority removed by no more than 150 years from the date of the suppression of the Order. On this account, he adds, the old Templar buildings in Bologna and Milan still retain the title "de la magione," that is, "of the *masson*;" although a less acute critic would, most assuredly, only be able to discover here nothing deeper than an Italian corruption of the French *maison* in its common sense.

The influence of the Crusades and their results upon the mind and life of mediæval Europe cannot possibly be exaggerated

The true masters of the Western barbarians in philosophy, science, and many of the arts, were the Arabs, firstly, those of Syria, later, of Spain. Together with their learning they communicated other ideas, far different from those originally contemplated by their pupils. Nevertheless, the connection between their science and their secret creed was so intimate that, in reality, no other result was to be looked for. So much of primitive Gnosticism, before its admixture with Christianity, was based upon Magism, that is, upon astrological ideas, as to make it often difficult to determine whether a Gnostic monument involves a religious notion, or is merely a sidereal talisman. For example, the Decani of the Signs, whose figures, according to Teucer, were commonly worn as amulets, are often to be seen bearing the names inscribed of Michael and other Jewish angels. In the flourishing times of Mahommedanism, before the spread of universal ignorance had established everywhere the dull reign of uninquiring orthodoxy, there existed at its very heart (probably originating in Persia) an esoteric body, styling themselves *Sufi*, a title evidently derived from the Greek Σοφοί, their predecessors. Now this title appears assumed as equivalent to the previous Γνωστικοί, although with far more arrogance, since these "wise" men claimed the *possession* of that knowledge of things divine which the Gnostics by their own designation were only "*desirous of knowing.*" Meantime, the tenets they held were precisely those of the old *Antitactae*, "ordinance-haters," as to the indifference of all things pertaining to the body, and the invalidity of the Jewish moral law (the mere appointment of the Demiurgus), as regarded the regulation of the life of the "Spiritual Man." Just as it is a constant charge of the Fathers against the primitive Gnostics that they outwardly conformed without scruple, in order to escape all annoyance, to the established religion of whatever place they chanced to inhabit, it is equally probable that the Manicheans and other sectaries of Asia, persecuted with like zeal by orthodox Byzantine and Zoroastrian Persian, would gladly shelter themselves under the easy cloak of the true religion of their Arab conquerors, during the two centuries following Justinian's reign, and either save

their liberty by *professing* Mahommedanism, or else continue, as tributaries, in the unmolested exercise of their old faith, being confounded by the uninquisitive conqueror under the general name of *Infidels.** "The sects of Egypt and Syria," says Gibbon, "enjoyed a free toleration under the shadow of the Arabian Caliphs," and therefore may reasonably be supposed to have maintained their peculiar notions and observances down to the time of the Crusades. Of such protracted existence we have the most convincing proof at the present day in the numerous sect, the Mandaites, or Nazarenes of the Shat-el-Arab, and Bassora; veritable Gnostics, holding a creed, the true image of that of Manes, in their 'Book of Adam;' and detested by their Christian and Moslem neighbours alike.

Now, inasmuch as these Sufi were composed exclusively of the learned amongst the Persians and Syrians. at a time when *learning* signified little else than proficiency in medicine and astrology (the two points that brought the Eastern sages into amicable contact with their barbarous invaders from the West), it is easy to see how the latter may have imbibed the *esoteric* doctrines simultaneously with the other teaching of those who were their sole instructors in all matters pertaining to science and art. Now the Sufi doctrine was based on that grand idea —one universal creed that could be secretly held under the outward profession of any established religion—taking, in fact, virtually the same view of all religious systems as that in which the philosophers of old had regarded them. Such too had been a striking feature in the Gnostic teaching: the *Naaseni*, or Ophites, says Hippolytus, boasted in language truly Masonic, "We of all men are the only Christians, standing in the *third gate*, and anointed with the ineffable unction out of the *horn* like David, not out of the *earthen vessel* like Saul, who consorted with the evil spirit of carnal concupiscence." These same *genuine* Christians at the same time zealously celebrated all the Mysteries of Paganism, affirming that in their higher *knowledge* they possessed the only key to the one truth locked up under those superstitious ceremonies. And in our day the acknow-

* The semi-Magian Abdallah and his new Ismaelites have a strong family resemblance to Weishaupt and his illuminati in the last century.

ledgment of one universal religion by the Freemasons, as expressed by their requiring from the candidate for admission nothing more than the declaration of his belief in one God, is denounced with pious horror by the bigots of every variety of the Christian scheme.

This recognition of one universal religion in fact pervades all the works of the lights of Mohammedan literature. In the *Makamat* of Hariri the sermons preached by his hero the Dervish are full of a sentiment more sublime when touching upon things pertaining unto God—a sentiment harmonising infinitely more closely with those of enlightened religious men of our times upon the same subject—in a word, these sermons breathe a spirit in every respect more *Christian* (to use the modern phrase) than characterises any writings of the actual Christian divines, the contemporaries of the author.* But this is necessarily so, Hariri and Mohammedans like him being guided by the traditions of the old philosophy still secretly maintained amongst them, whilst the spirit of modern Christianity is strongly, though unconsciously, directed by precisely the same influence revived, though under a different name, and professedly contemning its real source.

Again, the greatest of all Mohammedan sovereigns, the Mogul Akbar, was a true *Sufi;* equally so was his prime minister and historian, Abul Farez. It would be difficult to find in a modern Christian prayer-book, much less in any one composed in his age, an address to the Deity so sublime, so consonant with our present notions, as the invocation opening his *Ayeen-Akbari.* In all such outpourings of Oriental adoration no allusion whatever to their special lawgiver is to be detected, nothing to betray any distinctive sectarian prejudice; the reader, if unacquainted with the history of the author, would admire, but know not to what creed to adjudge the composition. Akbar, according to his vizier, "made a point of never ridiculing or condemning any form of religion." He had thus, perhaps without knowing it, reverted to the grand and distinguishing feature of the religion of Greece and Rome in their best times that discerned the same great truth, the real basis of universal

* He flourished in the ninth century.

toleration, that all religious systems were but expressions of the same idea,

"By saint, by savage, or by sage."

Wherever, in ancient times, the principle of toleration was apparently violated, it was in cases where the rites, by their corruption, had become prejudicial to public welfare, as when the Senate put down the Bacchanalia, or Claudius the Druids in Gaul, on account of their human sacrifices; exactly as Hiero of Syracuse had made it an article in his treaty with the vanquished Carthaginians, that they should discontinue their burnt-offerings of young children to Melcarth. Hesiod's maxim, Μὴ ἀρρητοῖς μωμεύειν, was that of his race, as well as of the Roman, and the same was the guiding principle of Akbar. From a hint dropped by his panegyrist it would almost appear that the Emperor had imbibed some slight tinge of Zoroastrian doctrine, for he remarks his particular veneration for the element of fire; and again the significant circumstance of his regulating his frequent daily prayers by the position of the sun in the heavens; and, what bears directly upon our subject, his favourite occupation was to converse with the *Sufi* and the learned of all nations and religions. It sounds also very odd to hear a Mohammedan grandee, like this writer, declaring that amongst the Brahmins were to be found "the most virtuous men upon earth," those very religionists in whom Akbar's successors, like Aurungzeb, could (quite according to our own ideas of what necessarily should have been his feeling) discern nothing but devil-worshippers, whom it was his bounden duty either to convert or exterminate.

The constant intercourse between Syria and Europe, maintained first by the flocks of pilgrims perpetually crowding to Jerusalem, then by the Crusades, and lastly by the establishment of the Frankish kingdom in Palestine, and of the different principalities upon the coast, produced vast effects, both apparent and concealed, upon the nations of Europe, more especially those seated upon the Mediterranean. Arabian influence brightly manifests itself in the poetry of the Troubadours, half-amatory, half-mystical like its model, of a spirit differing as widely from the materialism of classic elegiacs, as does the pointed "Sara-

cenic" architecture, with all its forms suggested by the tentpole and curtain, from the massive Romanesque which it so rapidly displaced. Of poetry and architecture alike the germs had been carried into France by the causes already noticed, and kept in full vigour by the permanent establishment of the two great military orders having their headquarters in Jerusalem, but looking principally to France for recruits and resources. For the Crusades were eminently a French *idée*, and both leaders and soldiers in the most important of them, were either actual Frenchmen or princes holding territories in France—our Norman kings for example. How many arts, the most admired in those ages, are direct importations from Syria or Egypt! Glass-working in all its processes connected with the manufacture of ornamental and coloured vessels, and painted windows, enamelling, majolica, damascening on steel, the coinage of gold, the cultivation of the silkworm. The Italian language has preserved this history in the terms, purely Arabic, still designating things pertaining to all such processes, as *zecca*, *tazza*, *cameo*, *mantece*, *rocca*, *gala*, *pataca*, *ricamare*, *&c.* Italian Gothic, particularly its civil branch, as exemplified in the buildings of the great maritime cities on the Mediterranean (those on the Adriatic continued faithful to the Byzantine taste), such as Genoa, Pisa, Florence, is a mere transcript of Cairo and Rosetta; to the latest days of the style bearing no resemblance to the Gothic then flourishing beyond the Alps.

This diffusion of Oriental ideas over Europe has a very important bearing upon the present inquiry, for it explains the readiness with which Manicheism was embraced in France during the two centuries preceding the fall of the Templars. These very Templars are found during their residence in Palestine exhibiting a tolerant spirit, utterly inconsistent with the ostensible object of their institution; making alliances with any of the neighbouring Emirs able to assist them in holding their own against the common enemy, the Soldan of Egypt; amongst whom figures conspicuously that arch-Gnostic, the redoubtable "Old Man of the Mountain." *

* His practice of intoxicating the neophyte with *hashish* (extract of hemp) before admission into his terrestrial paradise, gave the sect the name, afterwards accepted by the Italians in its present opprobrious sense.

A distinguishing feature of Gnosticisim was the profession of continence, at least as far as regards the propagation of the human species, which was denounced to the "spiritual" as the doing in the highest measure the will of the Demiurgus, and the perpetuating the reign of Matter. The strange means they adopted to preserve their vow inviolate may be learnt by referring to Clemens, where he quotes their interpretation of the ancient fable about Saturn's devouring his own children, or to Epiphanius when he describes the rites of the Ophite eucharist. In no other doctrine of the Gnosis is the Buddhistic influence more clearly traceable than in this, for any intrinsic merit in similar asceticism (as practised purely for its own sake) was never dreamed of by the Grecian philosophy, that offspring of reason in her brightest and most uncorrupted development. This self same affectation of purity contributed, even more than the proclaimed liberty of conscience, to promote the spread of Gnostic tenets in every age of their development, from Valentinus down to the grand apostle of Languedoc, Nicetas of Constantinople. His Manichæan bishops owed their success in great measure to their black robes and professed abstinence from, nay, more, pious horror of, all the pleasures of sense. For any preaching is certain to obtain flocks of converts that shall make, besides the promise of fully explaining things too high for man's understanding, an outward and noisy profession of asceticism, and proclaim the exaltation of the poor and the certain damnation of the rich as a capital article of its creed. For the vulgar mind ever admires what is difficult merely *because* it is difficult, however useless in itself may be the result, or even pernicious to society in its consequence, if logically carried out; and inasmuch as the abstinence from sensual pleasures is to them the hardest of all tests, so much the more is the ostentation of similar self-denial the most effectual method for gaining ascendency over brutish intelligences, utterly incapable of distinguishing the means from the end. Moreover, such doctrines find powerful allies, ready existing for them, in the natural enviousness and greed of common souls. The actually poor being ever the vast majority in the land, such hearers joyfully receive the teaching that promises

the punishment of their betters in the next world, purely as a counterbalance to their superior happiness in *this:* whilst as scarcely any one considers himself as a truly *rich* man, but is constantly climbing upwards towards a point that constantly recedes before him at every successive stage of his ascent, even the wealthy convert is enabled to hold the comfortable assurance that he himself continues in the category of the poor, and that the anathema is only launched against the one immediately above himself on the social ladder. In this feeling lies the true secret of the amazing success of Manicheism, its rapid absorption into itself of the earlier Gnostic forms, and above all, of the facility with which it got possession of those very regions where the Catholic Church was the most richly endowed; and where her clergy, particularly the *Regular*, were attracting the greatest envy by their wealth and ostentation.

The Templars began their course in actual poverty, leading a doubly hard laborious life—that of monk and soldier combined. To express this poverty the original device, or common seal, of the Order, bore two knights mounted upon the same horse, the most striking exemplification of humility that could be imagined in those days of chivalry. Becoming ashamed of such a badge as they grew in power, they altered it into the somewhat similar outline of a *Pegasus*—such at least is the old tradition. The Winged Horse, however, may from the first have involved a more spiritual meaning, allusive to the heavenward aspirations of those initiated into the Order. And when their career was drawing to a close, amidst the wealth and luxury that drew down upon them so cruel a destruction, the brethren, no doubt through some ingenious mode of self-deception, still flattered themselves that their vows were as faithfully observed as in the very springtide of their institution.

The strange and obscene* ceremonies observed on the admission of neophytes into the various secret societies that

* "*Art.* 26. Item, quod in receptione Fratrum hujus Ordinis, vel circa, interdum recipiens et receptus aliquando se deosculabantur in ore, vel in umbilico seu in ventre nudo, vel in ano seu in spina dorsi."

"*Art.* 29. Item, aliquando in virga virili."

"*Art.* 30. Item, quod in receptione sua illa faciebant juxta eos quos recipiebant quod Ordinem non exierint."

flourished under the Lower Empire and in the Middle Ages are all of them no more than faint traditions of the penances, or "Twelve Tortures" that purchased admission into the Cave of Mithras. How widely diffused were these *Mithraici*, especially in the West, is attested by the innumerable tablets, altars, and inscriptions still remaining in Germany, France, and this country. The religion of Mithras was so readily embraced and flourished so extensively amongst all the Celtic races, in consequence of its analogy to the previously dominant Druidical religion.

This affinity had struck with astonishment that sagacious observer, the elder Pliny, who must have had ample opportunity for forming a correct judgment during his protracted military service upon the Rhine. He declares (Nat. Hist. xxx. 4): "Gallias utique possedit (*Magica*) et quidem ad nostram memoriam; namque Tiberii Cæsaris principatus sustulit Druidas eorum et hoc genus vatum medicorumque per senatus consultum. Quid ego hæc commemorem in arte Oceanum quoque transgressa, et ad Naturæ inane pervecta? *Britannia* hodieque celebrat, tantis ceremoniis ut *dedisse Persis* videri possit; adeo ista toto mundo consensere quamquam discordi et sibi ignoto. Nec satis æstumari potest quantum Romanis debeatur, qui sustulere monstra in quibus hominem occidere religiosissimum erat, *mandi* verò etiam saluberrimum." A hundred years before, Cæsar (Bell. Gall. vi. 13) had stated: "Disciplina Druidica in Britannia *reperta* atque inde in Galliam translata esse æstimatur, et nunc qui diligentius eam rem cognoscere volunt plerumque eò discendi causa proficiscuntur." The subjects of study in the Druidical school were literally those of the Magian Gnosis, "Multa præterea de sideribus eorumque motu, de mundi ac terrarum magnitudine, de rerum natura, de *deorum immortalium vi ac potestate* disputant." For Pliny by his "Magica" understands the rites instituted by Zoroaster, and first promulgated by Osthanes to the outer world, this Osthanes having been "military chaplain" to Xerxes during his expedition into Greece. And this judgment of the Romans is fully borne out by native evidence, for Druidism (such as it appeared in its final struggle with Christianity during the short-lived independence of Britain after the with-

drawal of the legions) is a religion agreeing most wonderfully in many important points with the doctrine of Zoroaster. Thus, it expressly teaches the eternal existence and antagonism of the Two Principles, the final triumph of Good, and the Renovation of all things. A most valuable fragment of early Druidical teaching Plutarch has preserved to us in his strange essay "On the Face in the Moon," by the title of the "Doctrine of the Sons of Saturn," which is full of Gnostic ideas; those of Manes for instance, and even of Gnostic expressions.

Now Manes himself started as a Zoroastrian priest, and framed his new creed (according to Epiphanius) by engrafting upon the original the transcendental Buddhistic notions picked up by his true master, Scythicus, during his travels in India. Is there not then a possibility that some sparks of the ancient Mithraic doctrine may have lingered unnoticed in the West* until made to blaze up anew by the congenial breath of the Paulician Apostles? Indeed, one may even now discern the awful antique ceremonial as parodied to the minutest particular in the procedure of the modern convivial *hetæria;* for Jerome's *Miles*, the lowest grade in the Cave of Mithras, the Templars' "watchman placed on the roof of the house or church wherein the Chapter is held" (Art. 101), have their exact representative in the armed man, the "Tiler," lowest official, who stands sentinel at the door of the Freemasons' secret conclave.

The Druidical temple, always circular in ground-plan, whether formed out of native rocks, or built with Gallo-Roman masonry as in its latest example at Lantef in Bretagne (figured by Caylus, vi. pl. 124), consisting of two concentric enclosures pierced with numerous arches, bears in this point a remarkable analogy to all other structures dedicated to the element of fire. Such is the plan of the temple of Moloch (uncovered at Carthage by Davis), the Roman Vesta's temple, the Guebre fire temples at Balkh, to this day circular towers, and the great Sassanian temple at Gazacas destroyed by Heraclius in his

* Similarly there is every reason to believe that the mediæval Witches' *Sabbat* preserved uninterrupted the ceremonial of the ancient rural *orgia*, the only change being in the *name* of the presiding deity. Michelet is of this opinion in describing the immense *Sabbats* of the 17th century.

invasion. The spherical edifice within the palace containing the abominable idol of Chosroes, the image of himself, enthroned as in heaven, and all round him the sun, moon, and stars, which the superstitious king worshipped as gods: angels also had he placed standing about him like sceptre-bearers. Moreover, this enemy of God had so contrived by means of certain mechanism that drops of water should fall from the ceiling to imitate rain, and that sounds of thunder should reverberate therefrom. Our Verulamium also boasted a Mithraic temple commensurate to the importance of the place; until destroyed by the superstitious barbarian, Ealdred, eighth Abbot of St. Albans, for to no other purpose could have served "the very deep grotto, covered with an unbroken hill of earth, and approached by a subterraneous passage," the ruins of which were yet visible when Matthew Paris wrote. "*Specus* quoque profundissimum monte continuo circumseptum, cum *spelunca* subterranea quam quondam Draco ingens fecerat et inhabitavit, in loco qui *Wurmenhert* dicitur, in quantum potuit explanavit, vestigia tamen æterna habitationis serpentinae derelinquens."*

The foregoing considerations seem to furnish a reasonable solution of the problem set to the archæologist in the continued existence of genuine Gnostic symbols (whether in their pristine significancy or as mere dead forms, is for the Masons themselves to judge) still paraded before us as things holy and full of meaning. Treasured up amongst the Sufis of Persia, and the dark sectaries of the Lebanon, thence transmitted to the Templars, and handed over by them to their legitimate heirs the Brethren of the Rosy Cross, these signs maintain a perpetual vitality. The famous *Pentacle* (Solomon's seal) of the Templars was, thinks Nicolai with good reason, the powerful symbol, prescribed in the Diagramma of the Ophites to be offered by the ascending soul to the Genius of each sphere, to extort from them free passage to the supernal Light: "O First and Seventh One (Ildabaoth, æon of Saturn), born to rule with power, chief Word of the pure Intelligence! Perfect Work in the sight of the Father and the Son; by presenting unto thee in this seal the *sign of life*, I open the gate which thy power hath closed to

* *Gesta Abbatum S. Albani*, ed. H. T. Riley, vol. i., page 25.

the world, and freely traverse thy domains." A sufficient reason this for the constant appearance of this particular sigil upon tombstones of every date. The reverence with which the Hindoos still regard the same figure has been already noticed. In its *five points* lies concealed the same expression of the virtues of that numeral as was conveyed to the Grecian philosopher by the Delphic ε; interpreted in the same sense as by Plutarch, in the Middle Ages the Pentacle was held a sure protection against all danger of fire—though found unavailing, alas! for its knightly wearers; Béranger's dictum being too well verified,

> "Les hérétiques n'ont pas trouvé
> Onguent pour la brûlure,"

and was therefore regularly painted up in buildings that from their destination were particularly liable to such risk, brew-houses amongst the rest. This last custom explains how the pentacle came at last to indicate the places where fermented liquors were on sale.

As for the transmission of these symbols, the question would be at once settled should we accept the bold declaration of Lessing, for which, however, we have only his own authority (*Fortsetzung des Ernst.* p. 53): "The Lodges of the Templars were in the very highest repute during the 12th and 13th centuries; and out of such a Templars' Lodge which had been *continually kept up* in the heart of London, was the Society of Freemasons established in the 17th century by Sir Christopher Wren." But this venerable tradition is directly contravened by the testimony of the most unimpeachable of all witnesses, the grand *illuminato*, Spartacus Weishaupt himself. At Munich, in the St. Theodosius Lodge (in 1777), he received the first Masonic degrees, but was inexpressibly disappointed on finding in Masonry nothing beyond "les jeux d'une fraternité innocente!" Nevertheless he suspected that something deeper yet remained; and soon his expectations were fulfilled. That same winter his friend, Cato Zwack, had an interview at Augsburg with a certain Abbé Marotti, who conferred upon him the highest degrees, even those of the *Scottish* Lodges, and expounded to him all the mysteries, founded, according to the

Abbé, upon the religion and history of the Church. Zwack lost no time in communicating his acquisitions to Weishaupt, who replies: "The important discovery you have made at *Nicomedia*, in your interviews with Marotti, gives me extreme pleasure; let us profit by the circumstance, and extract from it all the advantages possible." Weishaupt had therefore been anticipated by his explanation of their symbolism, which he himself adopted in the new Mysteries he founded. Barruel adds (*Jacobinisme*, iv. 81) that the charge of *illuminatism* does not apply to the first three degrees of Masonry, neither to such as hold that these three degrees alone belong to the real, ancient, fraternity. This would intimate that the "Rosicrucian" had been later grafted upon the original number of gradations in the Masonic hierarchy.

For the sake of comparison I shall give Barruel's account of the degrees amongst the Illuminati, the predecessors of the Jacobins, viz.,

I. Novices.
II. Brethren of Minerva.
III. Minor Illuminate.
IV. Major Illuminate, or Scottish Novices.
V. Scottish Knights.
VI. The Lesser Mysteries: Epoptæ, or Illuminati Priests.
VII. The Regent or Illuminato Prince.
VIII. The Greater Mysteries; the Magus or King-Man.

Like the Rosicrucians, each novice upon admission received his *characteristic*, or mystic name, taken from Roman history: he then studied the geography of the Order which classicised modern places after a similar fashion: then he acquired the *cypher*, of which the simple set was this

12 . 11 . 10 . 9 . 8 . 7 . 6 . 5 . 4 . 3 . 2 . 1 .
a . *b* . *c* . *d* . *e* . *f* . *g* . *h* . *i* . *k* . *l* . *m* .

The other, more abstruse, cypher consisted of *particular symbols* The Noviciate lasted from two three years, according to the age of the Candidate. One of the things most strictly prohibited

was to ever write the *name* of either Order or Lodge; they must be expressed by ⊙ and Π respectively.*

In the admission to his degrees Weishaupt adopted all the Masonic ceremonial. For example, in making the "Scottish Knight," the "secret conclave" was hung with green; the Prefect, booted and spurred, wearing St. Andrew's Cross by a green ribbon tied *en saltire*, sat under a green canopy, and received the candidate similarly equipped, holding a mallet for sceptre. There was also the triple Benediction, and the sacrament, to conclude, administered by the Chaplain. At the making of the *Epoptas*, he was taken, blindfolded, by his sponsor in a perfectly closed coach, by a circuitous route, into the hall now hung with *red;* on a table covered with scarlet were laid the crown and sceptre, heaps of gold mingled with chains. On a cushion lay a white robe and girdle. The novice was told to choose: if he took the gold, he received a severe reprimand, phrased with a lot of *humanitarian* cant too tedious to copy here, and unnecessary besides—seeing that the same is perpetually dinned into our ears at the present day.†

At the end, the Hierophant delivered a long address upon natural liberty and equality, and all the rest thereto pertaining. Weishaupt, a professional *Atheist*, was both astonished and diverted at finding eminent Protestant divines, after their initiation, declaring that all these notions were the genuiue doctrines of the Gospel: which was certainly a very awkward truth to be held by the friends of the established order of civilised society. It is not, however, less a truth, if the same

* "'Brother A. B., *Write* upon this MS. of the R. S. of this Degree.' In his *attempt* to do this he receives a severe and prudent C. by the J. D. placed behind him for that purpose, by the C. T. united to his F. &c."—*Masonic Ceremonial.*

† The popular notion of the brand-mark received by Masons on initiation is derived from the *stigmata* impressed upon the ancient mystæ at their admission. A remarkable example is that of Ptolemy Auletes, who was thus marked in several parts of the body with the lotus, the colocynth-flower, and the timbrel of Cybele (Plutarch, 'De dignoscendo adulatore'). The marking of the Mithraici has been noticed in the section devoted to that worship (pp. 139, 140). Hence came the mediæval belief in the secret mark impressed by the Devil at the *Sabbat* upon those who swore allegiance to him; and which mark could be recognised by the witch-finders from its insensibility to pain.

doctrines be carried out to their logical consequences, instead of being employed in defending ideas deduced in reality from a totally different source. But Barruel, the refugee, who had just seen the doctrines of liberty, equality and fraternity practically and naturally expounded by means of the guillotine, reasonably enough puts down this declaration of Weishaupt's as the most conclusive proof of his audacious impiety.

The symbols, forming the proper subject of the present enquiry, embodied in their origin the deepest mysteries of Brahminical theosophy; they were eagerly accepted by the subtile genius of the Alexandrine school and applied to the hidden wisdom of Egypt; and lastly, in their captivating and illusory promise of enlightenment, the few bright spirits of the Middle Ages sought for something better than the childish fables, engendered by monkery upon the primal Buddhistic stock, which then constituted the Faith: and these holy figurations still continue to flourish, but only as the insignia and mummery of what, at best a mere charitable, is perhaps only a convivial association. In the same way Apollo's golden Pentagon, which of yore blazed on high above the Delphic shrine, in the Middle Ages the badge of the proudest Order of Chivalry, and a sure defence from peril of lightning and fire, has come at last to be degraded into the mere sign of a German pothouse!

A Master-Mason of the very highest degree lately informed me that he had detected the *Signs* now in use, engraved amongst the sculptures in the Cave-temples of Elephanta; and, what is still more important, that, although the Brahmins are Masons, yet if a European makes the *Sign* to them, they immediately put their hands up before their eyes, as if to shut out the sight of the profanation of things holy. But this curious fact can be explained with the utmost certainty. The Dionysiac Mysteries, the most popular of all in Greece, were believed to have been introduced direct from Syria, and necessarily brought along with them all the signs and rites of their birth-place. The painted vases of the period of the *Decadence*, of the fourth and third centuries before our æra, take for their favourite subject scenes from the celebration of these Mysteries, and in these pictures, mystic

Siglæ perpetually recur, amongst which the *Fylfot* shines conspicuous. But in truth, all the ancient Mysteries came from the East, as their names, the *Phrygian*, the *Mithraic*, the *Iliac*, declare, and these Mysteries existed publicly almost to the close of the Roman Empire, and how much further down into mediæval times they existed as secret and prohibited things, it is impossible to decide.

From the very nature of things we may be certain that their signs and symbols, after the esoteric doctrines were forgotten, passed into the repertory of all "who used curious arts," the alchymists, astrologers, and wizards of the Dark Ages, and then became the property of Rosicrucians, who truly were the parent *stock*, and not a recent brand (as is now pretended) of the present Freemasons.*

A most important contribution to the history of Masons' marks has (1877) been obtained through the researches of Sig. Arnoaldi Veli amongst the Gallic cemeteries around Bologna. Many of the vases there exhumed bear *Siglæ* upon their bases, more rarely upon their sides, which are unmistakably of the same nature, and, what is more curious, are constructed on the same principle as those used by the regular stone-mason at this very day.

Those in Class A (see Veli's *Scavi presso Bologna*) may be considered as of the highest authority, because they are the actual stamps of the potter, impressed upon the clay before baking. That they distinguished individuals, and were not merely religious symbols, but stood for the *proper* names of people unacquainted with writing may be inferred not only from the established custom of antiquity in this respect, but from the much more frequent occurrence of the class, of which he gives examples in list B. These are scratched upon the bases *after* baking, and therefore must have been added by the

* The Jews have a tradition that the boards of the Tabernacle were marked with Hebrew letters, as a guide for their adjustment in the setting up of that migratory Temple. Writing, therefore, becomes one of the thirty-two works interdicted to every religious Jew upon the Sabbath day. It is a singular coincidence that the stones of the Wall of Servius Tullius at Rome are inscribed with Mason's marks that much resemble Phœnician letters.

buyers, not by the makers. The great variety in the forms of these latter siglæ sufficiently proves that they were the "marks" of private persons, not of clans or tribes. Class C, of similar "marks" engraved upon articles of metal, lead irresistibly to the same conclusion. It must, however, be observed that although these characters cannot be distinguished at first sight from the modern Masons' Marks of which I have given specimens in the large Plate, it appears upon examination that no care has been taken to make them end in an *odd* number of points—the guiding rule with the modern craft.

To come from the Cisalpine to the Western Gauls, some evidence of the same practice is deducible from their coins. The large billon pieces, evident copies of Alexander's tetradrachms, found so plentifully in the Channel Islands, often bear a figure, upon the cheek of the Hercules' head, and repeated in the field of the reverse. What can these symbols, placed so prominently to catch the eye, have been intended for, but to inform the world what particular tribe of the confederation using one national type had issued the coin thus distinguished? There is some analogy to this in the Greek series, where distant cities use the type of Athens, or Corinth, but make it their own by placing some appropriate symbol in the field. We need not, however, carry out this theory to the same fanciful length as does the Baron Donop, who, struck by the evident resemblance of these figures to the Hindoo Caste marks, builds upon it a complete history of the migration of the Aryans into Jersey; and points out the Puranic deities to whom each of such symbols is to be referred. Of these figures, again, a great variety, and much better executed, are to be seen in the field of the pretty hemi-drachms of Solimara; which, as well as those above mentioned, belong to the times immediately preceding Cæsar's conquest of Gaul—a date clearly ascertained from that of the Roman denarii often forming part of the same deposits. Of the continued use of these "Marks" under the Roman rule in Gaul some vestiges are still to be discovered. The "Pile Cinq-Mars" which cuts so ludicrous a figure in Rabelais' description of Garagantua's horse, is a lofty quadrangular column, ending in a point, in the most compact

and skilfully executed brickwork, apparently built within the first century of the Empire. Upon each face, towards the top, are wrought in bricks of different colour from the main structure various devices of the same sort as those of the coins. These can be nothing else than the "armorial bearings," of the several cities or tribes that had combined together for the erection of so costly a monument; which we may safely suppose intended for one of those "plurima simulacra" of Mercury which Cæsar noticed in Gaul, and which forms the intermediate link between the upright stones (*menhirs*) roughly cut into a phallic shape at top, of the uncivilised aborigines; and the grand Colossus of Zenodorus,to which native taste had advanced by the time of Nero.

A lucky accident has thrown in my way another, and much more curious proof of the use of these "marks" by the more barbarous part of the Celts at a much later period. That the decoration of the skin which gave the name to the "Picts" consisted in *stigmata* in the literal sense of the word, and not in mere dyeing with woad (like the early Britons), is made out by Claudian's definite expression,

> ". . . . . *ferro*que notatas
> Perlegit exanimes Picto moriente figuras."—*De Bello Getico*, xxvi. 417–18.

"The Book of Kells" is a MS., written some time in the ninth century. In one of the facsimiles of its pages published by the Palæographical Society, amongst the ornamentation of one vast initial letter, the most conspicuous is the figure of a naked man, writhing himself amongst its most intricate convolutions. This man's body is entirely covered with "marks" of various forms; and from the circumstances under which the drawing was made we can safely assume that we have here preserved to us the portrait of a true Pict, taken from the life. The four centuries that had elapsed since Claudian wrote were not likely to have changed the customs of a country so remote, and in which the small amount of civilisation derivable from its Romanised neighbours must have gone backwards in proportion as they relapsed into their pristine barbarism. This pictured Pict may also lead us to conclude that the sigil

seen upon the cheek of the Jersey Hercules was actually tattooed upon that of the Gaul who issued the coin.

Out of deference to the popular belief in the Masonic *Brand mark*, I shall wind up this section with a few observations upon that most time-honoured method of distinguishing those initiated into any mystic community. To give precedence to the Patron Saint of Freemasons, St. John the Divine, his making the followers of the Beast receive his *Mark* "upon the forehead and the palm of the hand," is a clear allusion to the Mithraical practice, of which Augustine (as already quoted) speaks, in mentioning "a certain Demon, that will have his own image purchased with *blood*." Ptolemy Philopator, whom Plutarch describes as "passing his *sober* hours in the celebration of Mysteries, and in beating a tambourine about the palace," submitted also to receive the Dionysiac brand-marks; which were, no doubt, those symbols so plentifully introduced into the vase-paintings of Bacchanalian rites. "Brand-marks," however, is an incorrect name for such *insignia*, for they were imprinted on the skin, not by fire, but by the milder process of *Tattooing*, as we learn incidentally from Vegetius (I. cap. 8), and also that it was the regular practice in the Roman army, in his day, the close of the fourth century. He advises that the recruit be not tattooed with the devices of the standards (*Punctis signorum inscribendus est*) until he has been proved by exercises as to whether he be strong enough for the service. That these tattoo marks were the distinctive badges painted on the shields of the different legions, may be inferred from their insertion in the epitaphs of individuals of each corps.

Fig. 18.

WOODCUTS IN THE TEXT.

Frontispiece. Ceraunia of green jade, converted into a Gnostic talisman described at p. 197. Presented to the Repository, Woolwich, by General Lefroy.

Title-page. The Ophite version of the "Good Shepherd," described at p. 230. Sard. (New York.)

Agathodæmon Serpent, inscribed ΙΘΙ *With Me* [thou shalt be safe]. Remarkable mineralogically, as being cut in a piece of true jade (Nephrite) (Lewis Collection). P. xii.

No. 1. The Gnostic Gorgon, a late Byzantine amulet. The legend, full of blunders and contractions, is ΑΓΙΟCΑΓΙOC ΚΥΡΙOC CΑΒΑΩΘ ΕΝ ΥΟΙC ΥΨΙCΥOIC ΕΥΛOΓΗΜΕΝOC, "Holy, holy, Lord of hosts, in the highest, Blessed!" Drawn to the actual size, from a cast, sent to me many years ago by the late Mr. Albert Way. But by a singular chance, the gem itself (a green jasper) two years back, came into the hands of Mr. W. Talbot Ready, who supplied me with a drawing of it, from which it appears that its other face represents Saint Anne, with the Infant Madonna in her arms, and her name and title in the field, the legend around being ΥCΥΕΡΑ ΜΕΛΑΙΝΗ ΜΕΛΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΗ ΩC ΘΑΛΑΤΤΑΝ ΓΑΛΗΝΗ CΑΙΝΕΙ, "O, womb, black, blackening, as the calm soothes the sea [be thou quiet]. The gem is therefore a talisman for the protection of women during pregnancy; a fact accounting for its frequent occurrence; Chiflet figures another (the Gorgon side only) in his "Apistopistus," No. 70. P. 20.

No. 2. The Abraxas-god, as he is usually represented, with shield and whip to scare away all evil spirits. The reverse exhibits the Agathodæmon Serpent, surrounded by triplets of the sacred animals of Egypt, all paying him adoration. The legend in the field ΕΥΙΑ, is Syriac for "Serpent," the rest remains unexplained. Drawn to the actual size, from a red jasper, discovered at Bombay, to which place it had probably been carried by the Persian refugees of the seventh century. (Lewis Collection.) P. 41.

No. 3. A circular green jasper (of the size of the drawing) preserved from time immemorial in Maestricht Cathedral, where it passes for the "Seal of Saint Servatius," although in reality many centuries posterior to his date, being a late mediæval work. The obverse represents the bust of some saint; the reverse, the Gnostic Gorgon; around both rims a most barbarous attempt at a common Byzantine spell; that is, of a few of the first words only. The spell, in full, may be translated thus, "Death, (Μοῖρα) black, blackening, as a serpent dost thou writhe, as a lion dost thou roar; but as a lamb shalt thou lie down!" P. 57.

No. 4. The Abraxas-god mounted in the chariot of the Sun. This design is unique in its kind, and of great value, as proving the original identity of the Basilidan deity with the Solar Power. He has, however, been adopted into the new religion by the legend of the reverse, the "Great Names," *Iao* and *Abraxas* placed within a coiled serpent, emblem of Eternity. Green-jasper. (Bosanquet.) P. 103.

No. 5. Horus, the Vernal Sun, seated on the lotus, type of the world, and reviewing the adoration of the Baboon, attribute of the moon. Jasper. (New York.) P. 155.

No. 6. The Sun in his car, in his hand the orb; he is saluted in the legend as "Thou art our Father!" and the word in the exergue Trallianus tells us is one of his titles, and enters into a spell against gout. The reverse exhibits Luna guiding her milk-white heifer, the Grecian substitute for the silver *antelope* of the Hindoo Chandra Hæmatite. (New York.) P. 157.

No. 7. Isis, one lotus on her brow, holding a sceptre. Sardonyx. (Muirhead.) P. 175.

No. 8. Caduceus, within a myrtle wreath. On the reverse is beautifully engraved ΑΡΙΚΩΦΙ, which is the exact transliteration of the Hebrew charm against the special demon of the *latrina*, and which is found in the Talmúd, being consequently more ancient that the fourth century. The meaning is "Upon the head of a lion." Sard. (New York.) P. 178.

No. 9. The Abraxas god, engraved in so superior a style that the work must date from the earliest period of the sect. Green jasper. (New York.) P. 194.

No. 10. The Abraxas god, with the title "Ioa, Son of the Universe!" This is a truer version of the Hebrew than the "Eternal Son," proposed by Matter. Hæmatite. (New York.) P. 244.

No. 11. Talisman against the Evil Eye. The much-dreaded organ is shown encompassed by the symbols of the deities presiding over the days of the week, as the *Lion* for the Sun, the *Stag* for the Moon, the *Wolf* for Mars, &c., all combining to baffle the force of the stroke. This attribution of days came from the Chaldæan astrologers: it is represented in a painting at Herculaneum, but the earliest use of it to mark a date is found in Dio Cassius, who observes that Jerusalem was taken "on Saturn's Day." Sard. (New York.) P. 256.

No. 12. Drawing rudely scratched on the plaster of the wall of a guard-room, or the Palatine, representing a man of the lower class *tonsatus popellus*, or a slave, making a gesture of adoration to a biform diety elevated upon steps, with the explanatory inscription "Alexamenos, worships (or is worshipping) God." It is disputed whether this be a *bona fide* adoration of the jackal-headed Anubis; or the caricature by some heathen scoffer of the convert, Alexamenos and his newly-found god, depicted here in the shape described by Tertullian. See remarks at page 230. P. 279.

No. 13. Bust of Apollo, in the Greek style, interpolated by a later hand with a talismanic legend, that would have defied all interpretation but for the existence of another of the same nature, yet rather more explicit. This is a portrait of Pescennius Niger (Paris), inscribed with an invocation to the "Holy King, Apollo," to preserve the health of that Emperor, expressed like the present one, chiefly by the initial letters. Ouri, therefore, must be read Βασιλεὺς Ἀπόλλων Ἱερὸς Σεου(ηοον) [σῶζε] and, in the same way, calls upon the God of Health to show this favour to Pescennius' rival, Severus. Sard. (New York.) P. 302.

No. 14. Talismanic Ring of Bishop Seffrid, found in his tomb; now preserved in the Cathedral Library, Chichester. P. 328.

No. 15. The Agathodæmon, declaring by the legend "I am Chnumis, Sun of the Universe, 700." The Greek numeral must be the Number of a Name," just as 888 is that of *Jesus,* but what that name was, I leave to deeper Kabbalists than myself to discover. Calcedony. (British Museum.) P. 340.

No. 16. Serapis and Agathodæmon combined in one body; enthroned and holding the Orb, as being Lord of the Universe. He receives the adoration of the Cynocephalus, attribute of the moon; whence, perhaps, it may be inferred that Serapis is to be understood now in the more restricted sense of the Solar Power. Green jasper. (New York.) P. 358.

No. 17. Sphinx, emblem of mystery, sporting with a *narthex*, the wand carried by the candidates for initiation into the Dionysia. Campanian style, engraved upon the base of a Sard. Scarabeus. (New York.) P. 372.

No. 18. The *golden* Delphic E, surmounted by a fillet of roses. For the explanation of the symbol, see p. 297. Cameo in agate-onyx. (New York.) P. 431.

No. 19. Vase, the lower part modelled as a triple face of the boy Atys; at the base lie the pastoral staff and pipes. Atys, in the Phrygian Mysteries, is invoked as the "Shepherd of the white stars, and guiding them by the sound of his piping," which Tatian (Hymn to the Mother of the Gods) explains by identifying him with the power that governs the motions of the heavens. Red jasper. (New York.) P. 466.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES.

THE drawings were, for the most part, made from gems in the Praun Cabinet, now transferred to the British Museum, some few from my own collection, now in the Museum of Art, New York. The materials are either dark green and yellow jaspers, or calcedonies varying in colour from olive green to light yellow. All designs are drawn to double the actual size.

PLATE A.

VARIOUS TYPES OF THE GOD ABRAXAS.

1. Abraxas brandishing a whip, to scare away malignant influences, his shield emblazoned with some word of power. Reverse, the usual Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name of God.

2. Abraxas, armed with a sword; the exceptionally neat execution of the intaglio bespeaks the first days of the religion.

3. Abraxas, wielding a *mace*, a Persian weapon that betrays the Asiatic origin of this particular design; the *thunderbolt* in the field identifies this Power with the classic Jupiter. The reverse exhibits the Triple Hecate, Queen of Hell, brandishing various weapons for the same prophylactic purpose as the god himself. A unique combination of ideas, engraved upon a circular copper plaque, found in the south of France.

4. The Agathodæmon Serpent, with radiated head, identified by the legend with the god Abraxas. One of the few types that can with confidence be attributed to the sect of Ophites.

5. Abraxas, of very debased and late execution. The title "*Sabaoth*" on the reverse, properly signifying "of hosts," was mistaken by the ignorant Hellenists for the actual *name* of a Power, by translating "Lord of Hosts" as "the Lord Sabaoth." Under this title he figures largely in the sigillum of the "Pistis-Sophia."

PLATE B.

1. Abraxas, represented here with the head of an *ass*, and thereby identified with Typhon, a singular perversion of ancient ideas. This gem is valuable as distinctly declaring its purpose by the legend on the

reverse, ΦΥΛ(*φύλασσε*), "Defend me," addressed to the Power depicted upon it; and thus putting out of doubt the destruction of all the other specimens of its class.

2. Abraxas, of neat work and early date, not later than the fourth century.

3. The Giant Typhoeus defying Jove: his *serpent*-legs denote that he is the son of Mother Earth. This beautiful intaglio, which is of Italo-Greek workmanship, and found at Cumæ, is introduced here merely to show the source whence the sectaries of the Decline borrowed the idea of similar combinations of discordant natures. (Burnt sard: New York.)

4. Abraxas, with whip and shield, combining his influence with *Horus*, seated on the lotus, the regular personification of the Vernal Sun. The meaning of the type is set forth in the legend, which is the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew *Shemesh Ilam*, "Sun of the Universe." The union of the two types indicates that Abraxas is here to be understood in his original sense, the simple personification of the Solar Power.

Plate C.

1. Terminal figure, perhaps allusive by its form to Justinus' Æon, "The Cross." The interminable legend surrounding it yields no intelligible words, but the title below the Herme, ΝΙΧΑΡΟΠΛΗϹ occurs also on a talisman in the French Cabinet. The reverse gives the Seven Vowels (or "Voices") that shroud the Ineffable Name, which has never been uttered aloud since the day of the destruction of the Temple, but is communicated only in half-whispers to every Rabbi upon his ordination. It is a remarkable fact that a Talmudist, who remembered the Second Temple, observes that this Holy Name was "*warbled* rather than pronounced" in the course of the service; hence we may suspect the *possibility* of imitating its sound by the permutation of vowels that form so important an element in the construction of our talismans.

2. Father Nile, reclining and holding forth a cornucopia, emblematic of amity.* As the "number of his Greek name," 365, is equivalent to that of Abraxas, it is probable that, according to Kabbalistic rules, he here represents that god. This explanation is supported by the type of the reverse, Horus, seated on the lotus, addressed by the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew *Ablanathanalba*, "Thou art our Father!"

3. Horus seated in the *baris*, or sacred boat; the prow and poop whereof terminate in the hawk's head of Phre, and the ox-head of Apis. He is here addressed by the Ineffable Name.

4. The same deity, addressed as before by the salutation *Ablanathanalba*, followed by an unintelligible word. The unskilful gem-engraver, unable to form curves in the lettering, has given to his B the form of K, and increased the difficulty of deciphering this legend.

5. The same, but now seated upon the scarabæ, type of the Creator,

* The type also of an Alexandrian coin of Hadrian.

enclosed within the coiled serpent, emblem of Eternity. With these purely Pharaonic sigils the reverse combines the name of the Jewish angel Michael, and the Seven Vowels of the Ineffable Name; thus presenting an instructive example of that reconciliation of, apparently, the most antagonistic creeds which is the very foundation of Gnosticism.

Plate D.

SIGILS OF THE CNUPHIS SERPENT.

This class of figures has no connection with Gnosticism considered as a development of Christianity; being nothing more than talismans for the protection of the chest, as I have already shown from Galen. It is true indeed that the Kabbalists of Alexandria sought to heighten the *medicinal* efficiency of the ancient Pharaonic sigil by adding to it formulæ of their own fashion, embodying the all-powerful Name, but this did not endow the gem with any *spiritual* sense. The appellation "Kabbalist" I shall always employ in this treatise in its strictest acceptation, and the present is as good a place as any for stating my reasons for doing so. It is the rule nowadays to treat the Kabbala as the pure production of the Middle Ages, and such it probably is, in the form under which it is now presented to us. I will not, indeed, go as far as the most learned Rabbi of our times, and boldly assert that Moses himself was a profound Kabbalist, although "the Wisdom of the Egyptians," in which Holy Writ declares he was a proficient, was beyond a doubt something of very much the same nature. Whatever unprejudiced person will carefully read what I have adduced of the doctrines of Sastri and of Marcus (themselves "converted" Jews) will find there the regular system of the Kabbala fully developed, and its earliest and Egyptian rudiments in the "Pistis Sophia" of Valentinus. No person really acquainted with the history of religions can suppose that these theosophists *invented* these rules of interpretation: they merely transferred principles sanctioned by antiquity from the explanation of the Old Testament to that of the New.

To return to our *Chnuphis*, *Chubis*, or *Chuphis* (for thus the Greeks transliterated the Coptic *Kneph*) it is probable that the veneration in which this sigil of the Pharaoh Nechepsi was held, was the true source of the legend concerning Moses's elevation of the Brazen Serpent. At all events, I know of an enamel picture of the scene (date, thirteenth century) in which the Serpent, lifted up on the Cross, is figured with the radiated lion's head, really as he is seen on these talismans. This particular sigil is generally engraved on calcedony, varying in colour from olive-green to waxy-white. The best executed have for material the plasena traversed by an opaque white line (Pliny's *Iaspis Graminatias*), the estimation of which as an amulet by the Orientals he particularly mentions.

1. The reverse of this gem reads *Chumis*, accompanied by a row of vowels that appear to contain the word IEH, which is, according to Kabbala, an *inferior* title of God.

2. The Serpent elevated above the *thymele*, Bacchic altar—a combination betraying the influence of the Dionysiac Mysteries. He declares in phonetic Hebrew, "I, I am the Good Spirit." The reverse of this gem had been covered with a long invocation in minute characters; now almost entirely lost by the fracture of the material in the fire to which it had accompanied its owner. (New York.)

3. This Chnuphis, of exceptionally fine work and yet finer material, has each of the *seven* rays of the crown tipped by one of the seven vowels that make up the Ineffable Name. The reverse exhibits the serpent-entwined wand, (badge of the Egyptian priesthood) which generally goes with this sigil, and doubtless added to its power. Moses's rod and Aesculapius's club hence took their origin.

4. Another Chnuphis, in the ordinary style. It is noticeable how the gem-cutter has endeavoured to give variety to the endless repetition of the same sigil, by altering the arrangement of the serpentine folds.

Plate E.

MONUMENTS OF THE SERAPIS WORSHIP.

1. Serapis, viewed as the Sun-god, enthroned; at his feet, the triple-headed monster described by Macrobius. Before him stands Isis, or Mother Earth, holding a bunch of wheat-ears and poppy-heads, to mark her character. The legend is the invocation "Immaculate is Our Lady, Isis!" A fine specimen of Alexandrian art, in a beautiful sard. (New York.)

2. Venus, arranging her hair at a mirror, held up to her by a Cupid; two Loves, hovering in the air, hold a myrtle-crown over her head. The inscription "The Manifestation of Aroriph," occurs in a similar connection upon a gem in the Paris Cabinet. It is hard to determine whether she be the "nuda veritas," whose Kabbalistic revelation to Marcus is given in my text; or merely a talisman for engendering love towards the wearer; the material, magnetic hæmatite, supports the latter acceptation. The reverse exhibits Horus, seated on the lotus, planted upon the *baris*, which is constructed out of long papyrus-stalks lashed together. He here takes the title of *Abraxas*, and is surrounded by adoring triplets of all the animals held sacred by the Egyptians. The symbol of the Sun is seen at his right.

3. Bust of Serapis, very curious for the prayer surrounding it, "Protect Jupiter!" a proof that Serapis is here regarded as the Supreme Being, and the ancient Jupiter reduced to the rank of an astral Power; as, indeed he was occasionally so understood in better times. Thus Persius:—"Saturnumque gravem nostro *Iove* fregimus una." (v. 50.)

4. Isis, veiled, with the *tubulus* on her head, and leaning on a tall sceptre, in the pose of the Roman Juno; for whom she might be mistaken but for the invocation on the other side, "Baffle, Serapis, the Evil Eye!" which declares the object of this talisman.

5. Serapis, enthroned, seen in front face. Inscribed "Hermes," followed by three letters, the initials of some then well-known address to that god. Or if merely a private signature (Martial mentions a physician of the name) the initials refer to his business. The God of the Shades was a very fit patron for a professional who had doubtless done his best to swell the ranks of his subjects. Red jasper. (New York.)

Plate F.

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN TYPES ADAPTED TO GNOSTIC IDEAS.

It is in this class that the influence of Judaism is more strongly marked than in any other family of these monuments. These gems were designed as amulets against the power of demons, either considered specially, or as manifested in the diseases of which they were the final cause to mankind. But before proceeding further, it will tend much to the elucidation of this curious subject briefly to sketch the *orthodox* Jewish doctrine upon this point. There is no such thing in existence as a spirit *naturally* evil, inasmuch as God, being all goodness, was absolutely incapable of creating evil. Satan is himself an angel, like the others, and has his own place in the Court of Heaven; but he is deputed to test, by temptation, the strength of Man's virtue, since without a *struggle* there can be no *crown*. The Babylonian Rabbi, Philemon,* having demonstrated this grand truth to the satisfaction of his numerous school, was surprised the next day by a visit from this *Ange mal entendu*, in a bodily shape, who tendered him public thanks† for the pains he had taken to set his character in a true light. But, unfortunately, the Demiurgus had commenced his work by creating so vast a number of spirits, that the Sabbath-even came upon him before he had made bodies enough for half of them. These poor houseless beings are not naturally malignant, but are jealous of their more fortunate brethren, for the same reason that "the man who has no coat to his back hates the man that has." They therefore roam up and down the world, ever striving to force their way into bodies already occupied, where their struggles with the rightful owner give birth to all the maladies that flesh is heir to. It is remarkable that the latter belief is universal among primitive races, however widely separated—the Samoiedes, the Hindoos, the Red Indians. Something similar, too, may be found in Plutarch's curious disquisitions on the nature of demons, contained in his two Treatises upon Oracles.

It is the fashion of our days to believe that the Jews borrowed all their metaphysical theories from the Platonists of Alexandria; but whoever has gone deeply into the subject sees good reason to suspect that both Jews and Greeks had gone, independently of each other, to a much more ancient source for such traditions.

* Or "Polemo," as the Hebrew may equally well be read.

† "Kissed his knees" is the expression in the Talmud.

1. The Agathodæmon Serpent, mounted upon a pair of human legs. A unique variety of the class—the same idea being more usually embodied in a human figure with head and neck of a serpent; or in a serpent with the head of Serapis. The long invocation on the field evidently begins with the name of "Abraxas."

2. The jackal-headed Anubis, an *Egyptian* sceptre in each hand, advancing between the Sun and the Moon, the regular emblems of Eternity. A remarkable specimen of religious syncretism, for the power of the Pharaonic god is doubled by adding, on the reverse, the name of Michael, guardian-angel of the Jewish race, between four stars, which certainly stand for the letters of the Great *Tetragrammaton.*

3. Mummy, enveloped in the folds of the guardian Agathodæmon. The detached letters around (often so found in these gems) seem to cloak the word "Initia." If so, this may have been a token (*symbolum*) given to the neophyte upon his initiation into certain mysteries: a custom to which St. John alludes, mentioning the "white stone" with the New Name graven thereon, to be given to him that overcometh.

4. A Power equipped with double arms and wings, bearing sceptres to mark his dignity, and carrying on his head the sacramental Table. The tree-trunk below, with its *Five* lopped-off branches, had doubtless a deep mystic meaning, probably the *degree* of the person who carried the talisman. Of the most barbarous execution, but valuable for the name "Baincho" on the reverse: the astral Power, according to the "Pistis-Sophia," resident in the planet Mercury.

5. Anubis, in one hand the sceptre, in the other the lustral vase, standing above the open left hand, which Apuleius informs us was the type of *Justice.* At his side is the goddess of Truth, her head formed out of a bunch of ostrich-feathers: under her feet the udder-shaped vessel carried in the Isiac procession. One deity is invoked by "Thou art our Father!" the other as "Sun of the Universe!" The letters in the middle seem to make up the owner's name, "Pia . . ."

6. Anubis, advancing with the sceptre and *situla:* the legend on the reverse is unexplained.

7. A talisman, certainly meant to be of mighty efficacy, for it combines the influences of Anubis, Cnuphis, and Horus with that of the God of the Jews, rudely cut upon the four sides of a cube of steaschist.

PLATE G.

EGYPTIAN TYPES (*continued*).

1. In this composition an element from a little-used source is introduced. The Grecian Apollo, distinguished by his proper attribute, the bay-branch, is seen caressing the Ibis, sacred to Thoth, scribe of the gods. The latter deity being identified with Hermes, his bird carries the caduceus; it also bears upon its head the corn-measure, typical of abundance.

2. The Ass-headed Typhon, or the Principle of Evil, with quadruple

wings and one foot hoofed, carries by the tail two monstrous scorpions: over his head a scarabæus flying. Of no esoteric meaning, but simply an amulet against the bite of the reptile, made after the rule in such cases prescribed. The most convincing proof of the practice is the early Greek gem published by Gen. Cesnola ('Cyprus.' pl. xl. 17), representing two asps, with the explanation ΕΧΚ; and to this day the Arabs always draw upon their amulets the figure of the thing against which it ought to guard the wearer.

3. A *Dual* Power, who combines the jackal's head of Anubis with the ass's head of Typhon, whence one of his feet is hoofed, brandishes in his four hands swords and torches, wherewith to scare away the evil spirits. The legend on the reverse, ΠΕΡΑΑΜΒΑ ΥΒΑΚΑ ΚΞΙΚ Λ, has not been read, but contains the Coptic name of Anubis.

4. The Sun-god, Phre, with radiated head, *adoring* the seated Thoth, ibis-headed, and using the invocation (cut on the reverse) "Thou art our Father!" Inasmuch as the Neo-Platonists made Hermes to be the Power that regulates the motion of the heavens (for which reason Julian addressed his morning prayer to *him*), there is evident reason why the god of Day should thus do domage to Thoth as his superior and director.

5. A very popular *Gryllus*, its components being the emblems of the elements—the *Bird* standing for air; the *Lion* for Fire; the *Ram's head* for Earth, and the *Bacchic* mark for water. This Pagan talisman has been Gnosticised by Thoth's ibis, with the Holy Names, "Abraxas" and "Iao;" but the work on both sides is evidently from the same hand, and in the style of the fourth century. The material is a rarely-used stone—*obsidian*.

PLATE H.

EGYPTIAN TYPES (*continued*).

1. Tortoise lying upon the lotus, which springs out of the back of a crocodile. The unexplained legend of the reverse occurs again in connection with an analogous design—a vulture-headed winged Genius, seated on the back of a double-headed crocodile, published by Walsh (No. 13) in his 'Coins, Gems, &c., illustrating the Progress of Christianity.'

2. The Ark of the Covenant, apparently copied from the "Altar of Lyons," that so common device of the brass coins of Tiberius. The engraver of this late Roman gem had not studied the minute description of the Ark, given in the Law. There is a Rabbinical tradition (although savouring too much of Alexandrian philosophy to demand any credit) that the Cherubim placed over it were represented as male and female, in the act of copulation, in order to express the grand doctrine of the essence of *Form* and *Matter*, the two principles of all things. When the Chaldeans broke into the Sanctuary, and beheld this most astounding emblem, they naturally enough exclaimed "Is this your God, of whom you boast, that He is such a lover of purity!"

On the side is a blundered attempt at the mystic word, *Tetragrammaton*,

i.e. the Name of Four Letters,' *viz.*—*Jod, He, Vau, He.* For the Names of God, according to the Kabbala, are made up respectively, of *Four, Forty-two,* and *Seventy-four* letters. The second explains the motive for the number of sacrifices offered up by Balaam in his fruitless attempt to propitiate the God of the Hebrews; and perhaps may have induced the composers of the Genealogy of Jesus (though working independently of each other) to bring out the same mystic number by curtailing the second series of *three* of its kings.

3. A doubly-winged and doubly-armed Power, holding four Egyptian sceptres, and standing on a coiled serpent, enclosing a Holy Name. The legend is a transliteration of the Hebrew for "Light of Lights." Another form of such transliteration is given by Caylus ('Recueil d'Antiquités,' vi. Pl. 21), *σρωοριονσ*, reading from the end backwards; cut for reverse to a coiled serpent enclosing various *sigla.*

4. Thoth's baboon, bearing on his head the Solar disk, in the attitude of adoration. The reverse bears HNA-MEPΩ, sometimes written MAPΩ-HNI, "Enlighten my eyes!" whence we may suspect this very common type to be no more than an amulet against ophthalmia.

5. This gem is given here as a good specimen of a type of which great numbers are to be met with, although its whole conception, and the vague symbols in the field—the Solomon's Seal, celestial globe, etc., entirely out of the antique taste, refer its creation to the fancy of mediæval quacks and astrologers. Was the figure suggested by the idol "in the shape of an *Old Man,*" with whose worship the Templars were so persistently charged? The present example, belonging as it does to the original Praun Cabinet, must have been executed before the beginning of the seventeenth century.

6. The outline of the human figure filled up with "Holy Names," and thereby representing *Adam Kadmon,* "the Primitive Man" of the Kabala. The finest example of this curious design, and in which the letters are the most clearly defined, is the one Caylus gives (l.c. pl. 22), which has been cut by a later hand on the reverse of a Lion *passant,* in the Persian style.

7. The Baboon adoring a *Triangle,* Egyptian symbol of the Moon, elevated upon a column bearing an inscription. The fact that the Pythagoreans (who avowedly got their whole system from Egypt) symbolised Athene by the triangle, lends srength to the idea that the Attic goddess was in her origin merely the expression of the Lunar Power.

Plate J.

SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE MITHRAIC MYSTERIES.

1. This pretty design may be tersely described in a line of Manilius:—

"Quadrijugis et Phœbus equis et Delia bigis."

Sol and Luna in their appropriate equipages: a heathenish device enough, but the same hand has backed their influence by the invocation, "Iao

Sabaoth, Abraxas;" He, i.e. the living God, protect Aparastathe, the bearer of this talisman. Similar formulæ, always attached to *women's* names, very frequently occur.

2. The Zoroastrian *Dog*, of whom and whose office so much has been said in the text. The ill-cut *Bird* is intended for the *Raven*, the usual Mithraic attribute.

3. The *Lion* of Baal, the Syrian Sun-god; below, the Scarabæus typifying the Creative Power. The Phœnician inscription *Osan ēl*, "God gives strength," is the name of the owner of the signet. Lévy quotes an agate scarabæus at the British Museum exactly similar to this gem (a fine sard), a proof of the popularity of both type and name.

4. A unique talismanic device, converting a male Sphinx into a novel bird, by the addition of the legs of a crane and the tail of a scorpion. It is engraved in the Persian style: my motive for admitting it into the present class.

5. The Zodiacal Lion, guided by its astral Genius in its course through the seven planets.

6. The Sun-god, with radiated head, mounted upon a camel, typifying the East. Below is set the fire-altar of Mithraic worship. He is followed by Chanticleer, attribute of the god of Day, preceded by the Horse—his peculiar sacrifice, as Ovid tells us:—

> "Placat *equo* Persis radiis Hyperiona cinctum,
> Ne detur Celeri victima tarda deo." (Fasti. I. 305–86.)

Plate K.

MITHRAIC (*continued*).

1. Circular copper plate, of the same size as the drawing, bearing the name of *Aurelius Furellius*, the person for whose benefit the talisman was devised. It represents a female figure, standing in the attitude of adoration; legend, "The Birth of Salvation." On the reverse is seen the Solar Lion bestriding a corpse, a type so frequent in this class that it may reasonably be referred to the entrance-rite of initiation, the "simulation of death" alluded to by Spartianus.

2. The most elegant of these mystic designs that has ever come to my knowledge. Two Cranes, one with the head of a Ram, the other of a Bull, stand guardians over the Mithraic sacramental table, under which lies crouched the Solar Lion, "the House of the Sun." Upon the table are set the sacred vessels; above it is the Delphic E, badge of Apollo, between two Palmyrene (?) letters, and over all the Seven Planets, engraved with an accuracy worthy of its elegance in a very fine sard.

3. A talisman of uncommon potency, to judge from the profusion of symbolism with which its two faces are overloaded. A four-winged, four-armed Power, standing like the Babylonian Belus in the air, is involved with a multiplicity of legends, amongst which the usual formulæ "Thou art our Father," "Sun of the Universe," "Michael," "Adonai," can clearly

be read. The reverse shows a female figure standing and adoring the Deity, who guides the Solar light. In the legends we can distinguish "Abraxas," "Michael," and "Michalo."

4. This type only differs from the last by the addition of the prostrate man under the Lion's feet, and that nothing definite can be made out of the disjointed inscription. The reverse merely bears the *Great Name* "Iao, Sabaoth," and the Seven Vowels. The potency of such words is still an article of faith with all *true* Jews. In the year 1835–6, the Rabbi of Neutra, in Hungary, actually stood his trial for murder on the charge of having cursed, by the "Ineffable Name" an *enlightened* lady whom he had ordered to leave the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, because she had ventured to make her appearance there with her *hair in sight*, and who had died suddenly on the very same day. The Rabbi only escaped conviction by publicly and solemnly disclaiming the possession of any such power, to the inexpressible disgust of his whole congregation, who looked upon him as a wretch that had denied his God in order to save his life!

Plate L.

MITHRAIC (*continued*).

1. The Mithraic Lion, moving through the stars of heaven. The reverse exhibits a complete assemblage of the *Siglæ* that are found, dispersed, upon so many talismans. That they stand for the names of deities and astral Powers may be guessed from the fact that Mohammedans still express *Allah* by a circle filled up with diagonal lines.

2. Lion-headed Man, doubtless a *Leonticus* (one of the grades in the Mithraic Mysteries), uttering, with uplifted hand, the inexplicable adjuration, "O, Centaur of God, Thou match for a hundred [demons]!" Here ἑκατοντομάχος is formed after the analogy of μονομάχος, "a match for one."

3. A *Mobed* (Zoroastrian priest or *Magus*) performing his nocturnal devotions before an altar, on which are set up various *sacra*, amongst which may be recognised the regular insignia of his profession, the Sword and the Divining-rods. Engraved upon the base of a calcedony cone, an early form of the signet in Assyria.

4. Horus, the Vernal Sun-god, making the gesture of adoration, his whip resting upon his left arm. He is seated upon the seed-vessel of the lotus, that aptest symbol of the Universe, in virtue of its innumerable contents. In the long, clearly-cut legend that fills the exergue, no hitherto-explained formulæ are to be recognised.

Plate M.

GENERAL TALISMANS.

1. Zodiacal Monster, compounded of Scorpio and Capricornus, carrying a legionary standard. Bearing in mind that the former *Sign* is under the patronage of Mars, according to Manilius—"Pugnax Mavorti Scorpius haeret"—and the latter a badge of the second Augustan Legion, we may

reasonably suppose this gem to have been engraved for the benefit of some member of that corps. Sard. (New York Museum.)

2. Three lines of the usual Gnostic *siglae*, in a cartouche formed by a coiled serpent, precisely in the same way that the Brahmins still write the Great Name AUM— a sure evidence of the meaning of these mystic characters. Sard., set in an iron ring, of which only fragments remain.

3. Fortuna, with rudder and horn of plenty, standing. The word *Feliciter*, in scattered letters, the usual acclamation of the crowd, and the *palm-branch* prove this gem a present to some favourite *auriga*. Its purport is the same as that of the monogram so often found enclosed in the field of the Antoniate medal, also accompanied with a palm, which has at last been made out to contain the elements of *Palma Feliciter!*

4. Masks of Silenus and of Bacchus, combined into the outline of an elephant's head, bearing a caduceus in his trunk. The typical beast of *India* is an allusion to the *Indian* origin of the god; and the conceit was a favourite with the Romans, to judge from the number of such compositions that they have bequeathed us. Red jasper. (New York.)

5. Astrological *Trine*, or figure produced by dividing the circle of the Zodiac into equilateral triangles. Here, Virgo (Astræa) at the apex of a triangle, is borne up by Taurus and Capricorn. This was the horoscope of Pescennius Niger, who placed it on the reverse of a coin, on account of its appropriateness to his surname of *Justus*, of which virtue Astræa was the emblem.

6. The Gorgon's Head: the type explains itself by the legend, "I protect Rhoromandares"—some Greco-Persian, to judge from his Oriental name. The younger Lucian tells us in his 'Philopatries' that the Gorgon was placed upon the shields of the Heroes as being "a thing that wards off all dangers." Red jasper. (New York.)

7. Mars, grounding arms, in the costume of a soldier of the times of Constantine. The legend declares the virtue of the *sigil*: "Mars hath cut off the disease of the liver." But a most interesting point in the amulet has been discovered by Prof. Stephens, viz., that the four characters behind the head of Mars are the Runes for ABLE, *Help*. Under Constantine and his sons, the Franks (as Ammian observes) were paramount in the army. It is easy to conceive how some officer of that nation has thought to augment the great virtue of this important talisman by the addition of one of his national spells. Engraved in a slight manner, upon hæmatite.

8. Naked Warrior, upon a prancing steed, brandishing a *mace*, that specially Oriental weapon; legend, "The Seal of God." Curious for the material—a turquoise; to the present day the Persians firmly believe in the protective virtue of this gem, to which they give the name of *Phiruz*—"The Victor."

Plate N.

GENERAL TALISMANS (*continued*).

1. Universal Nature, symbolised in a highly poetic manner, combining all her forces for the protection of the bearer. The *Eagle* of Jupiter (Air); the *Dolphins* of Neptune (Water); the *Lion* of Sol (Fire), are moulded into the mask of Pan, whose semi-bestial nature is of the *Earth*, earthy.

Winckelmann, in describing an intaglio of the Stosch Cabinet (No. 1232) Pan, playing upon his syrinx, seated in the centre of the Zodiac, observes that the ancients considered this god as the "Type of the Universe"; and saw in his horns and shaggy hairs mystic allusions to the solar rays. For the same reason Apollo shared his Gryphon with Pan, and Orpheus sings of him as "Attuning the harmony of the world with his sportive music." Onyx cameo (Rollin and Feuardent).

2. Isis, standing, with the *Asp*, badge of royalty, rising from her forehead. The Coptic legend opens with the name of *Osiris*. The characters in the inner circle seem to be Demotic—they are *not* Palmyrene. I have published this gem, as being the finest example of the class that has ever come to my knowledge, by the kind permission of its owner, Mr. J. C. Robinson. Dark jasper. (On the reverse, a later hand has inscribed the "Great Name," and the Seven Vowels, to adapt the talisman to the new creed.)

Nos. 3 and 6 are very frequent forms, made up entirely of *siglae* and *Numerals*; on which latter subject more shall be said further on.

4. This spell, "Great is the *Name* of the One God," is the Jewish defiance to its rival, "Great is the *Name* of Serapis,"—of which Caylus publishes a beautiful example, in *relief*, of antique paste—a material that indicates a large manufacture of the same article to meet a constant demand.

5. Certain astral Powers, represented by their then well-known symbols, are enlisted, by this engraving, in the service of a lady, *Sabinia Quinta*. A popular kind of talisman this; another very similar is known to me, made for the benefit of one *Victorina*.

Pythagoras is perpetually referred to by Hippolytus as the real master of the Gnostics in the application of *Numerals* to the expression of things divine. He is known to have learned his system in Egypt; and necessarily brought away with him the cyphers which he found employed for the same purpose amongst his teachers. The primitive Egyptian numerals were of the simplest nature, but their *abbreviations* ultimately became distinct symbolical cyphers for the several days of the months; and out of these cyphers the Arabs composed their own system of notation. Hence it follows that many of the Gnostic *siglæ* may be no more than numerals connected with the astrological use of the charm on which they occur. In fact, Porphyry says of Pythagoras (in his 'Life') that his famous 'Numbers' were merely hieroglyphs, whereby he expressed ideas connected with his own philosophy. The so-called "Pythagorean Nume-

rals" are shown in the MSS. of Boethius's Geometry, composed in the sixth century. And that the "Numbers" of Pythagoras were *Ten*, appears from the remark of Aristotle (Met. vii. 8) "that some philosophers maintained that ideas and numbers were of the same nature, and amount to *Ten* in all."

That the Numerals as written down by "the last of the Romans," were Egyptian demotic characters in their origin is a very probable conjecture; but it is a curious fact, and remarkably confirms what has been said above, that several of them when viewed upside down assume the exact form of our present Arabic cyphers.

Plate O.

HINDOO SYMBOLS AND CASTE-MARKS.

I. *No.* 1. Type of Mahadeva or Siva. Fire personified.

No. 2. Type of Vishnu: Water.

No. 3. The *Sherkun*: symbol of the union of the two Elements.

No. 4. The five-pointed figure representing the conjunction of Brahma (*Creator*) with Siva (*Destroyer*) becomes the famous "Solomon's Seal," the badge of the Jewish nation, and therefore engraved upon their tombs in the Roman Catacombs.

The equilateral Triangle, *Trikun*, symbolises Triune Co-equality. A Point (mathematical) the self-existing Deity. The circle expresses Brahma, or Eternity. The Triangle inscribed in the Circle, Trinity in Unity. The Circle within the Triangle, Unity in Trinity.

The worshippers of a *Sacti* (Female Power) mark their sacred jars with the very expressive symbol, *No.* 5; those of Vishnu with *No.* 6; and those of Siva with *No.* 8, which signifies the copulation of Siva with Durga.

Amongst the signatures of the ancient *Jaina* (Buddhist) kings, occur the symbols 8 and 9; and also the so-called "Maeander," that frequent decoration of Greek Coins.

The six following symbols are various *Caste-marks*, which religious Hindoos put upon their foreheads every morning, with ashes of cowdung, or coloured earths, and powdered sandalwood, producing a great variety in them by the employment of different colours. Those figured here designate the followers of Vishnu.

II. These marks distinguish the votaries of Siva and his wife, Pauvati. The most obvious symbol of the Passive Principle of Nature, the mystic *Yoni*, (and with which Sesostris branded the nations that had submitted to his arms without resistance) is decorously repressed in the general form of these marks, the two Deities being those that preside over propagation and change which the vulgar call by the name of *Death*.

III. Other caste-marks, denoting minor differences in the sects that bear them: they are given here because they include in their number some that appear to have been the originals of certain Mediæval *siglæ*.

IV. Characters cut upon the rock in the sandstone quarries of Silsilis

in Upper Egypt. That they are *alphabetical* may be inferred from the fact of their accompanying the figures of various animals; they are of great interest to us, being identical with those so often found upon our talisman.

V. Palmyrene characters from a finely-cut inscription now in the Louvre.

VI. *Siglæ*, exactly of the nature of Masons' Marks, and of very ancient date, for they are found on the pottery deposited in the Gallic tombs around Bologna. Some are stamped in the clay *before* baking, and therefore must have indicated the maker's name; but the greater number have been scratched on the surface at some later time, probably when placed in the sepulchre, to carry down to posterity the memory of the deceased. Those here given are selected from the list figured by the Conte Gozzalini in his very instructive memoir 'Gli Scavi presso Bologna,' 1877.

VII. Masons' Marks, cut on the ashlar of the old Palace of Sadilat, near Ispahan, whence they were copied by Ouseley, in the belief that they were inscriptions in some unknown tongue.

VIII. Masons' Marks from the "Drawing-room" of Raglan Castle, an Elizabethan building. They will suffice for specimens of the notation, all the mediæval, early or late, being of the same nature, though infinitely varied in minor details. Many lists of these have been published from time to time, the most recent, of the Marks in Duffield Church, a Norman building, published in the Journal of the Derbyshire Arch. Soc., ix. p. 168.

IX. Every genuine Free Mason (*not* Rosicrucian *recoctus* Freemason) after serving his apprenticeship, and being made "free and accepted" of the Craft, receives his own "Mark," which he must thenceforth cut upon every stone that he dresses, in order to identify his own work when pay-day comes. The essential principle in the Mark is that it must have an *odd* number of terminations. The Marks here set down were in use with the masons employed in the construction of the South Wales Railway. The most convincing proof of the emptiness of the lofty pretensions of our so-called Freemasons, is that they actually are entirely ignorant that this most ancient rule of the Craft, to which they pretend to belong, is still regularly followed.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX

BY

JOSEPH JACOBS, B.A.

PART I.—GNOSTICISM AND ITS SOURCES, pp. 1–112.

THE Gnostic heresies play so important a part in the Christianity of the first three centuries that they naturally come up for treatment in all the Church histories for that period, such as those of Gieseler, Neander, Hase, and Schaff, as well as in the histories of Christian doctrine (Hagenbach, F. K. Meier, F. C. Baur, A. Neander, L. Noack, &c.), and even in the histories of philosophy of Ueberweg, Zeller, &c. But the monographic treatment of the subject from the theological standpoint—the Gnostic gems attracted early attention—may be said to have begun with

A. Neander.—*Die genetische Entwickelung der vornehmsten gnostischen Systeme.* Berl. 1818. [Sober and clear.]

C. A. Lewald.—*De Doctrina Gnostica.* 1818.

J. Matter.—*Histoire critique du gnosticisme et de son influence sur les autres sectes religieuses et philosophiques pendant les six premiers siècles.* Paris, 2 tomes, 1828. [Second and best edition, Strasbourg, 3 tomes, 1843. Somewhat superficial and viewy, but still useful; giving outlines of whole subject, including iconography.]

E. Burton.—*Inquiry into the Heresies of the Apostolic Age.* Oxford, 1830. [Bampton lectures for 1829, uncritical; superseded for English readers by Mansel.]

J. A. Moehler.—*Versuch über d. Ursprung des Gnosticismus.* Tüb. 1831.

F. C. Baur.—*Die Christliche Gnosis.* Tübingen, 1835. [The place of publication indicates the tendency of this publication. Baur's views are read to best advantage in his *Das Christenthum der 3 ersten Jahrhunderte.*]

Norton.—*History of the Gnostics.* 1845.

H. Rossel.—*Geschichte der Untersuchungen über d. Gnosticismus* in his *Theologische Nachlass.* Berl. 1847.

R. A. Lipsius.—*Gnosticismus* in Ersch and Grüber. Bnd. 71. 1860. [The starting-point of new lines of inquiry rendered necessary by the publication by Miller of the *Philosophumena* attributed to Hippolytus (Clar. Press, 1851).]

W. Möller.—*Geschichte der Cosmologie der griechischen Kirche bis an Origenes.* Leipzig, 1862.

H. L. Mansel.—*The Gnostic Heresies of the First and Second Centuries.* London, 1875. [Posthumous. Edited by J. B. Lightfoot. Best English work, clear, fair, mainly founded on Lipsius, classification of sects geographical. His arrangement is: *Notices of Gnosticism in New Test.* (iv. v.)—*Precursors, Simon Magus and Menander* (vi.)—*The Ophite Sects* (vii.)—*Cerinthus, Carpocrates, Nazarenes and Ebionites* (viii.)—*Syrian Sects, Saturninus, Tatian, Bardesanes* (ix.)—*Egyptian, Basilides* (x.)—*Valentinus and Valentinians* (xi. xii.)—*Asiatic Gnosticism, Marcion* (xiii.)—*Judaising Reaction, Clementines, Elkesaites* (xiv.).]

A. Hilgenfeld.—*Die Ketzergeschichte des Urchristenthums.* Leipzig, 1884. [Ill-arranged, but at present the work round which discussion on Gnosticism centres.]

These are the chief monographs on the whole subject. Besides these, several articles in theological reviews may be mentioned, many of them reaching the length of monographs. They were mostly occasioned by the various publications mentioned above, as can be seen by their dates. F. R. Lücke in *Berliner theol. Zeitsch.* 1819; J. C. L. Gieseler in *Hall. lit. Zeit.* 1823; and in *Studien u. Kritiken*, 1830; F. C. Baur. *ibid.*, 1837; H. T. Cheever in *Amer. Bibl. Repos.* 1840; R. Baxmann, *Deutsche Ztst.* 1861 [translated *Amer. Theol. Rev.* 1862]; Hilgenfeld in *Ztst. f. wiss. theol.* Bd. xiii. Articles in encyclopedias often show original research, or present useful summaries: besides the epoch-making one of Lipsius in Ersch and Grüber, reference may be made to the same writer's article "Gnosis" in Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexikon* (1868); C. P. Wing in McClintock and Strong, vol. iii. 1873 [useful bibliography]; W. L. Alexander in last edition of Kitto and J. L. Jacobi in Herzog-Plitt.

The SOURCES are scanty and scattered, at any rate as regards independent works by Gnostics. In addition to scattered fragments in Grabe's *Spicilegium*, there have been published—

Münter.—*Odæ gnosticæ.* Kopenh. 1812.

Norberg.—*Codex Nazareus vel Liber Adami.* Leiden, 1815.

[The so-called Bible of Gnosticism, i.e. of the Mendaites; on whom see *Christian Review*, Jan. 1855, and Petermann in Herzog.]

A. Hahn. — *Bardesanes Gnosticus Syrorum primus hymnologus* Leipz. 1819.

A. Hahn —*Antitheses Marcionis Gnostici.* Leipz. 1823.

M. G. Schwartze.—*Pistis Sophia, opus gnosticum a codice manuscripto Coptus Londini descripsit et Latine vertit M. G. Schwartze*, edidit J. H. Petermann. Berl. 1851–3.

[Now considered to be a production of the later Ophite schools, see R. Köstlin, *Die gnostische System des Buches Pistis Sophia* in *Theol. Jahrb.* for 1854.]

But the real sources of our knowledge of Gnosticism are to be found in the earliest heresiologists, Irenæus (*Adv. hæreses*), Epiphanius (*Adv. hæreses*), and Hippolytus (*Elenchus* and *Philosophumena*); on the trustworthiness of these a considerable literature exists.

G. Volkmar.—*Die Quellen der Ketzergeschichte.* I. Bnd. 1855.
R. A. Lipsius.—*Zur Quellenkritik des Epiphanios.* 1865.
" *Die Quellen der ältesten Ketzergeschichte.* 1875.
A. Harnack.—*Zur Quellenkritik d. Gesch. des Gnosticismus.* 1873.
" " in *Zt. f. lut. Theol.* 1874, pp. 143–226.
Hilgenfeld's *Ketzergeschichte* goes thoroughly into these sources.

P. 3.—*Aristobulus.* Valckaener's monograph *De Aristobulo Judæo,* 1806, is still the fullest and best.

P. 4., vide p. 18, note on Enoch.
" Book of Adam "—*Codex Nasareus Liber Adami appellatus, syriace transcriptus, latineque redditus a M. Norberg.* Berlin, 1815.

P. 7.—Of the large literature on Ephesus it is sufficient to refer to Guhl, *Ephesiaca,* Berl. 1843; Falkener, *Ephesus and the Temple of Diana.* 1862.

P. 8.—On traces of Gnosticism in the Gospels. C. C. Tittmann, *De vestigiis Gnosticorum in Novo Testamento frustra quæsitis,* Leip. 1773; translated *Contributions to Foreign Literature.* New York, 1827. On Pre-Christian Gnosis, Lightfoot. *Colossians,* pp. 80 seq.

P. 14.—Title given above, also Köstlin's monograph.

P. 24.—Jews in ancient world form the subject of Prof. Mayor's elaborate notes on Juvenal xiv. 96–106, running over twelve closely printed pages and preceded *more suo* by an elaborate bibliography of previous treatment. The only thing of importance since is a paper of Heyd's *Les juifs devant l'opinion romaine* in *Rev. des études juives.* 1884. The relations of Gnosticism and Judaism formed the subject of the historian Graetz's first work, *Gnosticismus und Judenthum.* Krotoschin, 1846.

P. 29.—The Zendavesta is now translated in *Sacred Books of the East,* vols. iv. xxiii. and xxxi. For literature see Tiele, *Outlines of the History of Religion,* § 100. Chief work, Haug, *Essays on the Parsis* in Trübner's Oriental Series. On Persian influences on Jewish angelology, Kohut, *Angelologie des Talmuds.* 1868.

P. 33.—Dr. Ginsburg collected in small compass the modern views on the Kabbala in his monograph *The Kabbala.* 1866. It has attracted little attention from Jewish scholars since that date. All scientific inquirers place the origin of Kabbala in the twelfth century, though mysticism akin to it appears as early as Bible times. On the great influence of the Kabbala in Middle Ages cf. Stöckl, *Gesch. d. Philos. im Mittelalter.* Bnd. ii. On the Talmud at the time of writing three monographs are about to appear—Prof. Strack separately; Dr. Ginsburg in Smith-Wace, *Dict. of*

Christ. Biog.; and Dr. Schiller-Szinessy in *Ency. Brit.* Hamburger's *Real-Encyclopädie*, though unequal, is useful and at present the easiest means of getting second-hand information about Talmudical topics.

P. 40.—Camillo Leonardi, *Speculum Lapidum.* Ven. 1502.

P. 42.—The earliest monograph dealing with the relations of Gnosticism to the East is J. J. Schmidt, *Verwandschaft d. gnostischen Lehre mit den Religionssystemen d. Orients.* Leip. 1828. On Manes and Manicheism the great work is still Beausobre, *Histoire critique du Manichéisme.* 1734. But important additions to our knowledge have come from Oriental sources, which are given in somewhat haphazard fashion but with excellent index in Flügel, *Mani, seine Lehre und seine Schriften.* Leip. 1862. Early works on Mani are given in Fabricius, *Bibl. græc.* t. vii. p. 310 seq., ed. Harles. See also Kessler, *Untersuchungen z. Genesis d. manichaisch. Religionssystem.* 1876.

P. 49.—For bibliography of Buddhism see Tiele, *Outlines* § 82. A good short account by T. Rhys Davids (S.P.C.K.). The best recent books are Oldenburg, *Buddha; his Life and Doctrines*, 1885; and H. Kern, *Der Buddhismus u. seine Geschichte in Indien.* Leipz. 1885.

P. 51 *n.*—See *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, translated by S. Beal. 2 vols. 1885.

P. 52.—The best account of the Essenes is in the appendices to Lightfoot's *Colossians*, strangely neglected by German inquirers as Lucius.

P. 58.—The special literature on Simon Magus is rather large.

Mosheim.—*De uno Simone Mago* in his *Dissert. ad hist. eccl.* pert. 2nd ed. vol. ii. Alton. 1767.

A. Simson.—*Leben und Lehre Simon Magiers* in *Zt. f. hist. Theol.* 1841.

F. Huelsen.—*Simonis Magi vita doctrinaque.* Berl. 1868. [Progr.]

A. Hilgenfeld.—*Der Magier Simon* in *Zt. f. wiss. Theol.* 1868, pp. 357–96.

R. A. Lipsius.—*Die Quellen d. romischen Petrussage.* Kiel, 1872.

W. Möller in Herzog-Plitt, 1884, t. xii. pp. 246–56.

On the alleged statue of Simon see A. van Dale, *De statua Simonis Magi.* Amst. 1700; and *Corp. Ins. Lat.* vi. 1.

P. 70.—On Basilides besides the Disputatio in Zacagni, *Collect. monument. veter.* see

Uhlhorn.—*System des Basilides.* 1855.

Baur in his *Theol. Jahrb.* 1856.

Hofstede de Groot.—*Basilides als erste Zeuge f. neutestament Schriften* [translated from Dutch]. 1868.

J. L. Jacobi.—*Ueber d. ursprungl. Basilid. System* in *Zt. f. Kirchengesch.* 1877; p. 493 ff.

P. 82.—Besides the Ophite Textbook 'Pistis Sophia' mentioned above, the special treatments are to be found in

Mosheim.—*Gesch. d. Schlangenbrüder.* Helmst. 1746–8.
A. Fuldner.—*De Ophitis.* Rint. 1834.
Lipsius.—*Ueber de ophit. System* in *Zt. f. wiss. Theol.* 1863–4.
F. Giraud.—*Ophitæ, dissertatio historico-theologica de eorum origine placitis ac fatis.* Paris, 1884 [best modern work].

P. 104.—On the Egyptian Pantheon see Lipsius, *Der Götterkreis d. alten Aegypter.* Berlin Academy, 1851, and Tiele *l. c.*, § 29. Their representation in art best given in Perrot-Chipiez, *Histoire de l'Art dans l'Antiquité—Egypte* (also English translation, 1884). Maspero, *Archéologie égyptienne.* 1887.

Part II.—Worship of Mithras and Serapis, pp. 115 *seq.*

The interesting problems that have collected about the worship of Mithras have been dealt with in the following special works:—

Sainte-Croix.—*Recherches critiques sur les mystères du paganisme.* Paris, 1817.
Seel.—*Die Mithras Geheimnisse.* 1823.
Hammer.—*Mithriaka.* Vienna, 1834.
Creuzer.—*Das Mithreum.* Heidelb. 1838.
Lajard.—*Recherches sur le culte public et les mystères de Mithra.* Paris, 1847–8.
Windischmann.—*Mithra.* 1857.

Shrines of Mithras are described by J. Hodgson in *Eliena Archeologie* i. 274–320, who gives the earlier literature, and by Stark, *Zwei Mithræen d. grossherzogl. Alterthümersammlung in Karlsruhe.* 1864.

P. 116.—On the Persian relations of Mithraicism see Burnouf, *Sur le Yaçna.*

P. 117.—For another etymology see G. Barzilai, *Gli Abraxas, studeo archeologico.* Trieste, 1873.

P. 119.—This view of the origin of Christmas was first enunciated by Wernsdorf, *De origine solemnium Natalis Christi ex festivitate Natalis Invicti,* Wittenb. 1757; he is followed by Jablonsky in his *Opuscula,* Amst. 1809, vol. iii. p. 351 seq., who argues that the Basilidans caused the adoption (p. 361).

P. 120.—The latest monograph on the Sadducees and Pharisees is that of E. Montet, *Essai sur les origines des partis sadducéens et phariséens.* Paris, 1883. A full bibliography at end of Seiffert's article *Sadducäer* in Herzog-Plitt.

P. 129.—Flam. Vacca in Nordini, *Roma Antiqua,* pt. iv. 1771.

P. 137.—On contemporary Parsees, T. D. F. Karaka, *History of the Parsis,* 2 vols. 1885.

P. 139.—Caste-marks of modern Hindoos are given in Sir G. Birdwood's *Industrial Arts of India.* 1880 (plate M).

P. 153.—On penances in general, the exhaustive work of F. W. H.

Wasserschleben, *Die Bussordnungen der abendländischen Kirche.* Halle, 1851. On those of the Brahmins, Sir M. Williams, *Modern India*

PP. 158 seq.—See bibliog. note on p. 104.

P. 174.—The mitre is unknown in the Eastern Church; v. Hefele, *Beiträge z. Kirchengeschichte,* t. ii.

P. 179.—Reference may be made here to Lessing's well-known essay.

P. 195.—The latest study of the *jettatura* is, I am informed by Mr. Nutt, a series of articles, *La Fascination,* by Tuchmann in *Melusine.* 1885–7.

Part III.—The Agathodæmon Worship and the Abraxas Gems, pp. 215 seq.

P. 217.—On serpent worship comp. introductory essay to Ferguson, *Tree and Serpent Worship,* second ed. 1873. Among Semites, Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgeschichte* I. § iv.

P. 226.—J. Bellermann, *Ueber die Gemmen der Alten mit dem Abraxasbilde.* Stuck 1–3. Berl. 1818, 19, 20.

P. 230.—This formed the subject of a monograph by F. X. Kraus, *Das Spottcrucifix.* Freib. 1872. V. cut on p. 279 here.

P. 251.—Vide Barzilai's tract quoted in bibliog. note on p. 117.

P. 254.—On the age of this "Gematria" see J. Gow, *Hist. of Greek Mathematics,* p. 44.

P. 259.—For bibliography of Basilides see note on p. 70.

P. 263.—On Valentinus, G. Henrici, *Die Valentinische Gnosis und die Heilige Schrift.* Berl. 1871.

P. 279.—On the fig. see monograph referred to in bibliog. note on p. 230.

P. 281.—The 99 epithets of God in Islam form the subject of E. Arnold's poem, *Pearls of the Faith.* 1882.

P. 281 *n.*—Levy, *Gemmen und Siegel.* 1869, p. 47–9 and Taf. iii.

P. 284.—*Die Seherin von Prevorst* was published 1866, and translated into almost all European languages.

Part IV.—The Figured Monuments of Gnosticism, pp. 305 seq.

Gnostic gems have long attracted the attention of antiquarians, their separate investigation beginning with

Macarius.—[Heureux] *Abraxas seu Apistopistis.* Ant. 1657; with appendix by Chifflet. [Plates included in Gorlæaus, *Dactyliotheca,* 3rd edit. Leyd. 1695.]

Kirchmann.—*De annulis.* 1657, c. xxi.

Montfaucon.—*L'Antiquité expliquée.* Paris, 1722; vol. ii. livre iii. Les Abraxas, pp. 353 seq. Supp. vol. ii. 1724, pp. 209 seq.

Gori.—*Thesaurus gemmarum astriferarum.* Florence, 1750, fol. [includes essay by Passeri, *De gemmis Basilidianis*].

Marrette.—*Traité des pierres gravées.* 1750. II. 68–73.

F. Münter.—*Versuch über d. Kirchlichen Alterthümer der Gnostiker.* 1790.

Bellerman.—Vide bibliog. note to p. 226 [only vignettes on title pages].

Kopp.—*Palæographia critica.* 1819–29; 4 vols. [third and fourth on Abraxas].

Matter.—*Histoire du gnosticisme.* 1828. [2nd edition, 1843.]

Hammer.—*Deux coffrets gnostiques du moyen âge.* 1832.

Stickel.—*De gemma Abraxea nondum edita.* 1842.

Matter.—*Voyage gnostique en Italie.* 1852.

King.—*The Gnostics and their remains, ancient and mediæval.* London, 1864. [First edition of present work including all the gems in the preceding and more also: 13 plates and 27 woodcuts.]

No collection of consequence has been made or published since 1864 till the present volume.

P. 309.—On ΙΑΩ see Graf v. Baudissin's elaborate essay "*Der Ursprung des Gottesnamens* Ἰάω" in his *Studien zur semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, 1873, pp. 181–254. On the name itself cf. S. R. Driver, *Recent Theories on the Origin and Nature of the Tetragrammaton* in *Studia Biblica.* 1885, pp. 1–20.

P. 370.—On the *apices* of Boethius considerable discussion has arisen. Woepcke, in *Jour. Asiat.* 1863, p. 54, traces them from India; T. H. Martin, *Annali di matem.* 1863, p. 350, from Egypt; while Friedlein, *Zahlzeichen*, pp. 15–19, &c., and Weissenborn in *Zt. Math. Phys.*, 1879, declare the passage in Boethius to be a forgery. See Gow, *Hist. Greek Math.*, p. 38.

P. 372.—On magic squares treated mathematically, see De Morgan in *English Cyclopædia, sub. voce.* sect. *Arts and Sciences*, vol. v. col. 415.

Part V.—Templars, Rosicrucians, Freemasons.

On the Templars the most complete history is still that of Dupin, *Histoire de l'ordre militaire des Templiers.* Bruxelles, 1751. On their mysteries, Loiseleur, *La doctrine secrète des Templiers.* Orleans, 1872. And the trials, Michelet, *Procès des Templiers.* 1871. The statutes contained in Merzdorf, *Geheimstatuten des Ordens der Tempelherren*, Halle, 1877, have been shown to be fictitious by H. G. Prutz, *Geheimlehre und Geheimstatuten des Tempelherren Ordens.* Berl. 1879. See also F. Schottmüller, Der Untergang des Templer-Ordens, mit urkundlichen Beiträgen. 2 vols. 1887.

On the Rosicrucians the earlier literature is given in W. v. Murr, *Ueber d. wahren Ursprung d. Rosenkreuzer.* See also Buhle, *Ursprung und vornehmste Schicksale d. Orden d. Freimaurer und Rosenkreuzer*, 1810; and Klüpfel, *sub voc.* in Herzog-Plitt. On the origin of Freemasonry,

full references in R. F. Gould's huge and uncritical *History of Freemasonry*, vol. i. 1884.

P. 393*n*.—A third edition in two vols. appeared in 1887.

P. 409.—On the influence of these Manichæan sects in spreading Eastern folklore through Europe, see M. Gaster, *Greeko-Slavonic literature*. 1887.

P. 416.—*Assemblies of Al Hariri*, translated by T. Chenery, vol. i. 1867; and Rückert's remarkable translation, *Dei Verwandlungen des Abu Seid*.

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FIG. 19.

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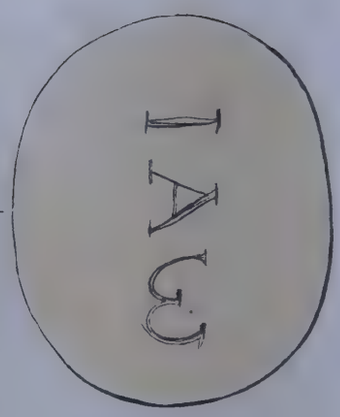
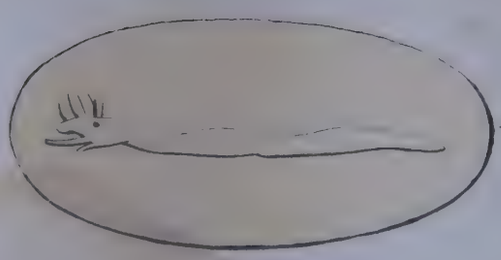


Fig 1

Fig 2

Fig 3



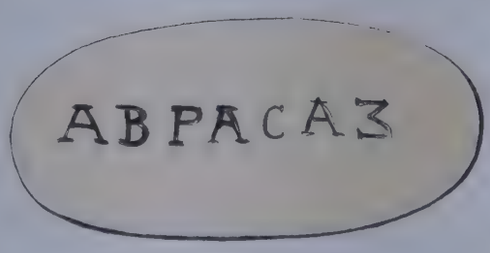
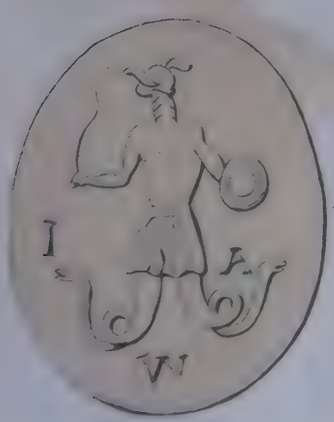
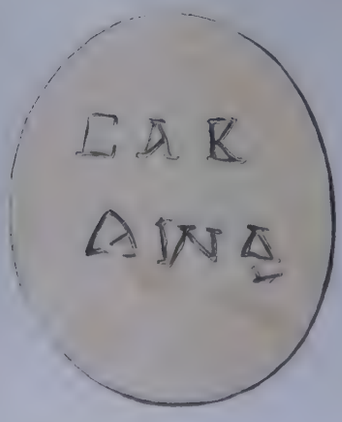


Fig 4





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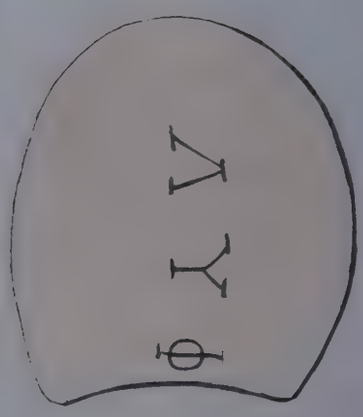

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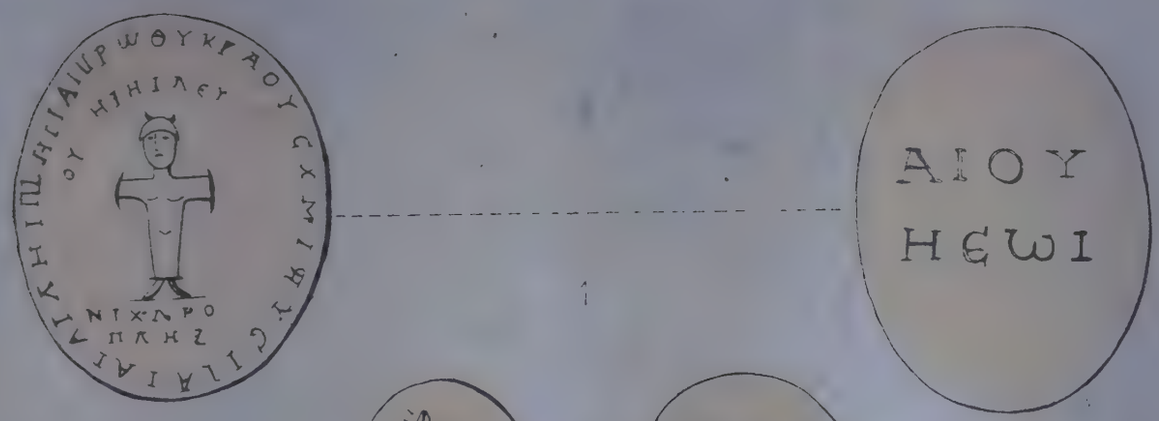

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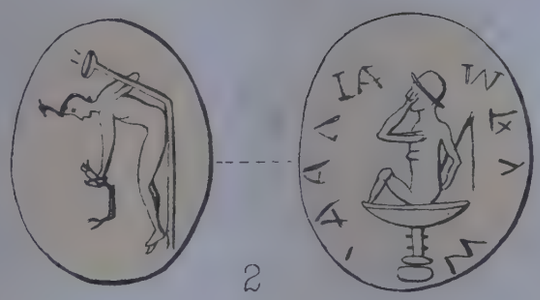

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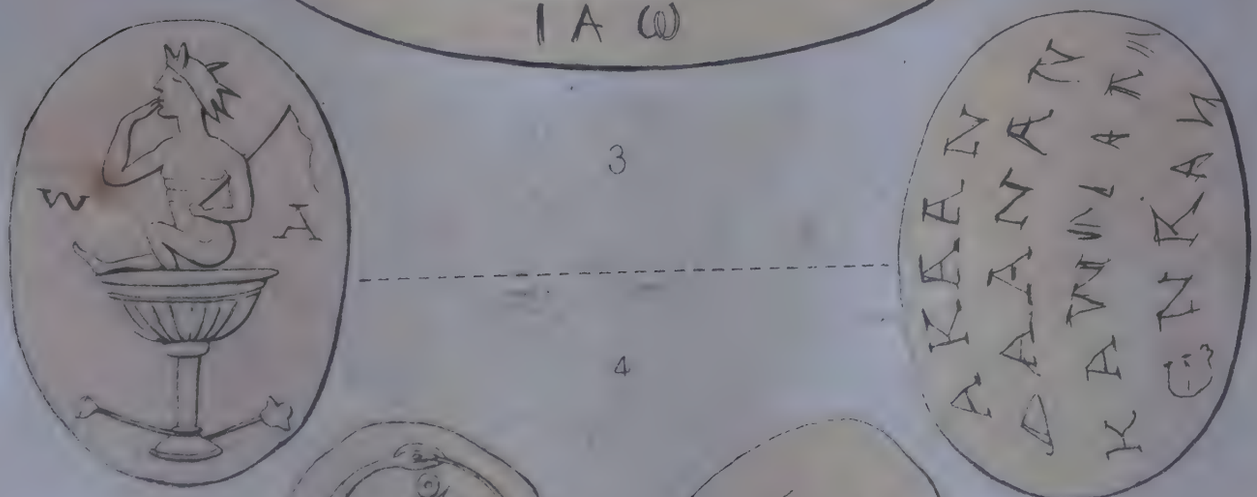

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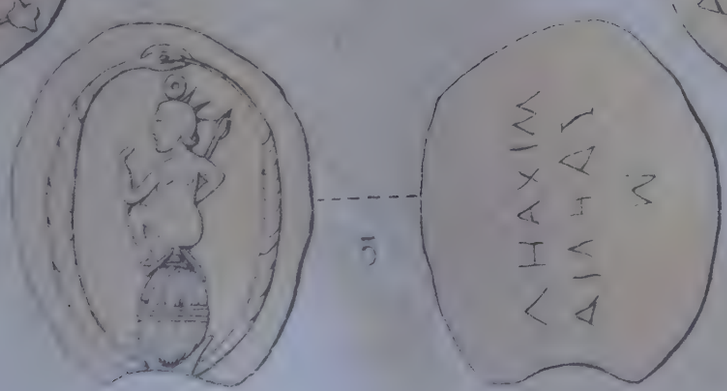

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ΞΕΝΟΝΙΚΑΙΕΙ

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ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΝΙΚΑΙΕΙ

2

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΝΙΚΑΙΕΙ

3

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΝΙΚΑΙΕΙ

4

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΝΙΚΑΙΕΙ

PLATE E.

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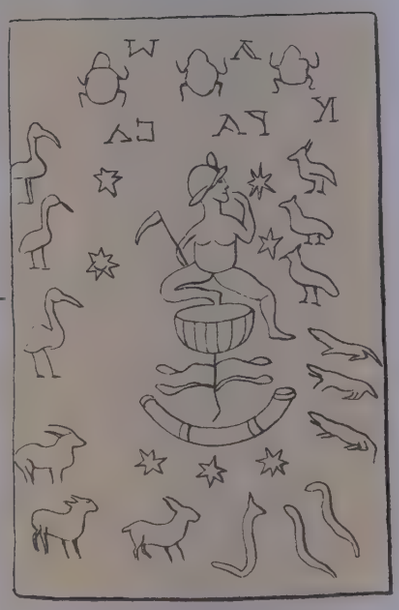

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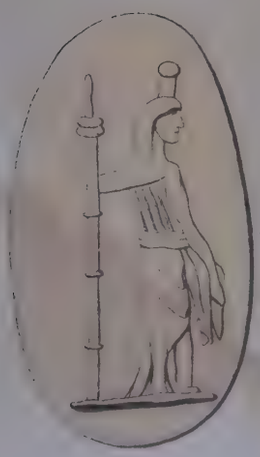

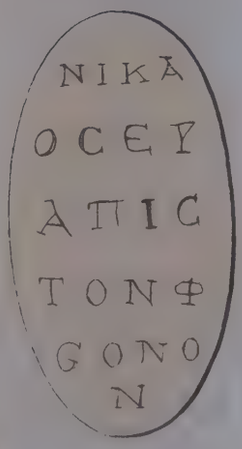

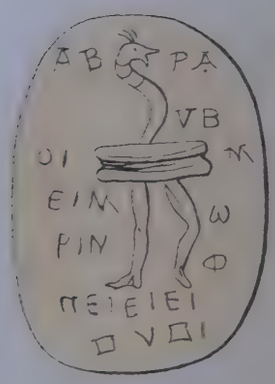

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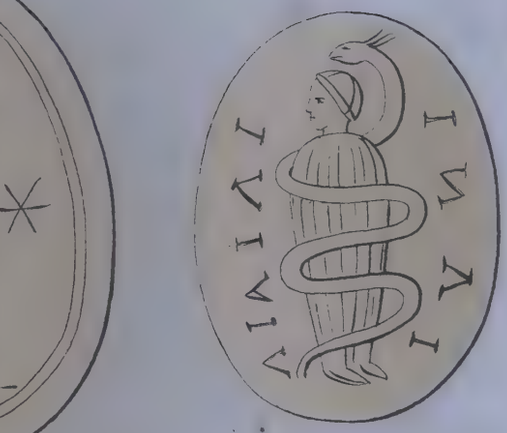

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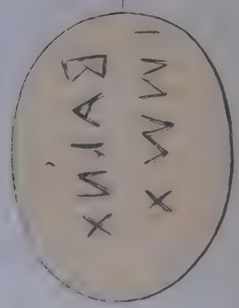

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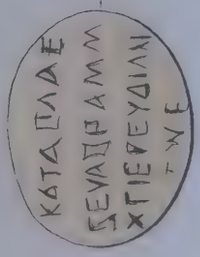

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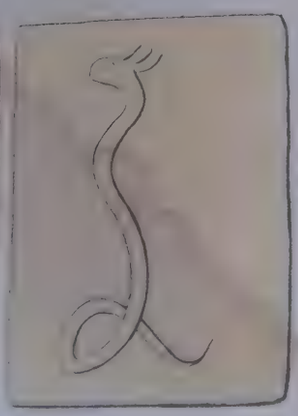

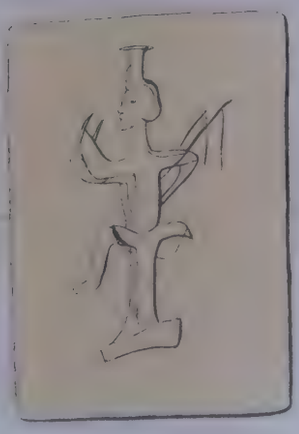

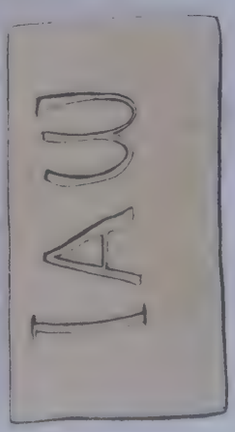

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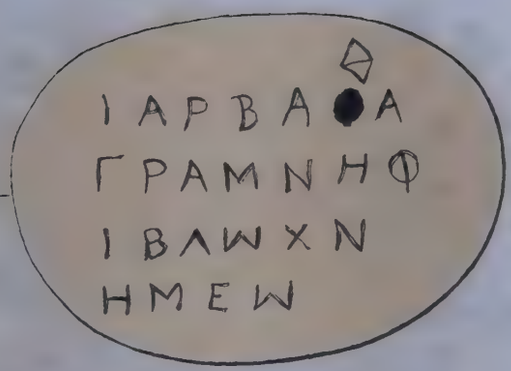

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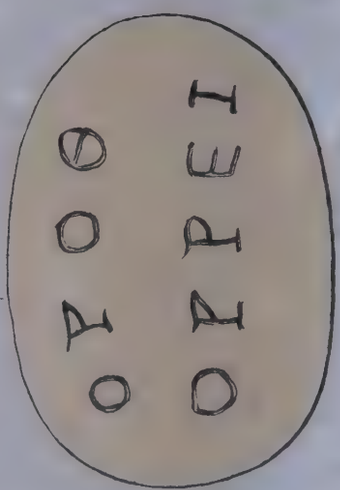

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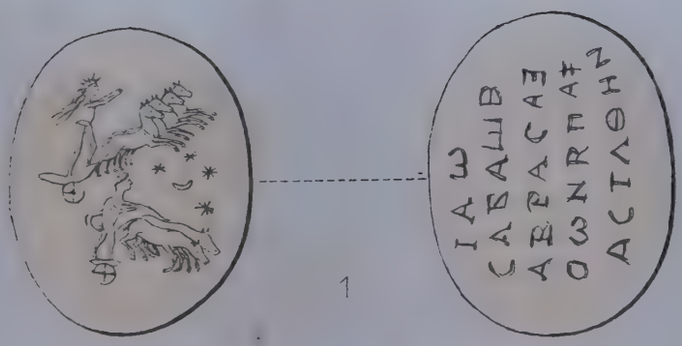

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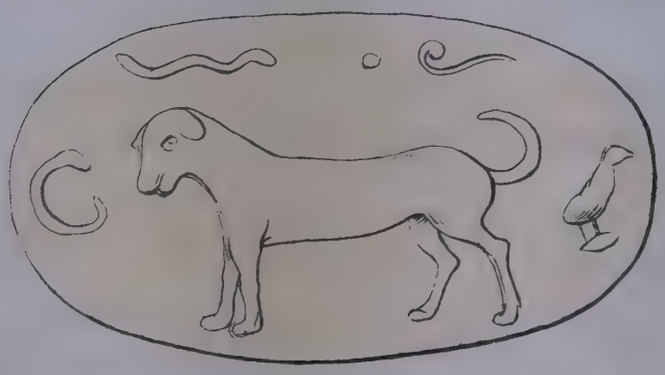

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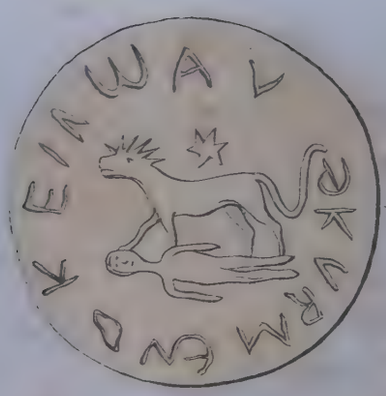

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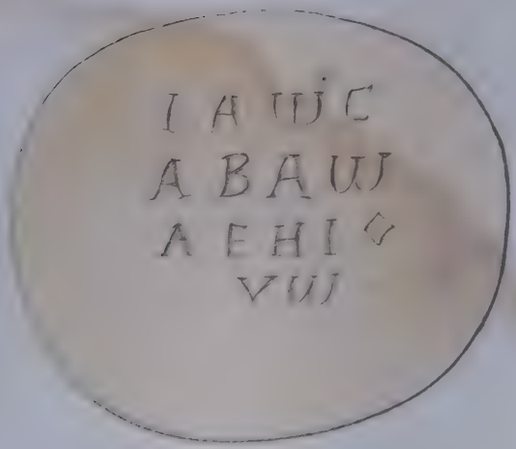

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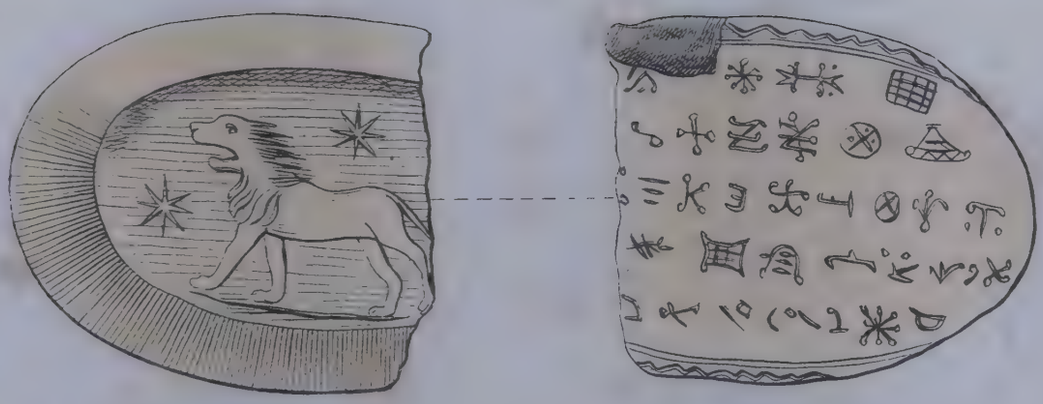

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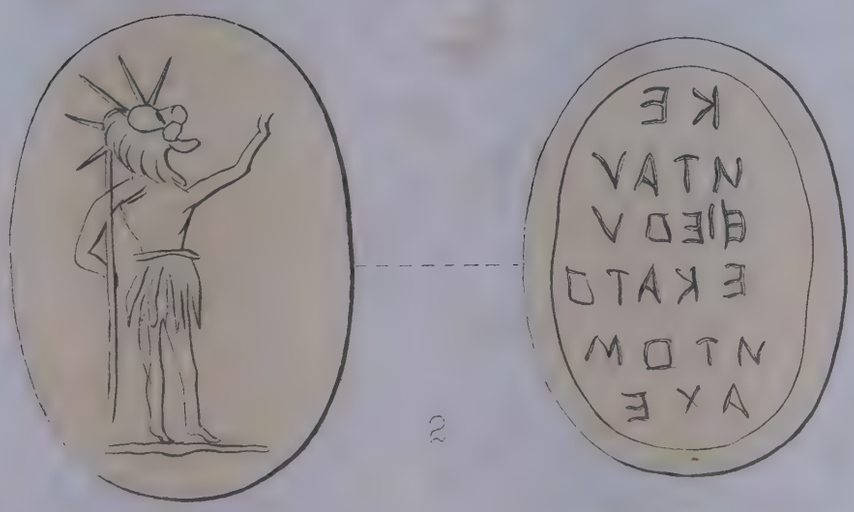

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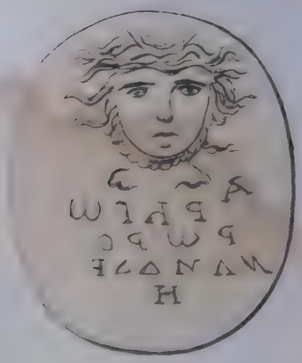

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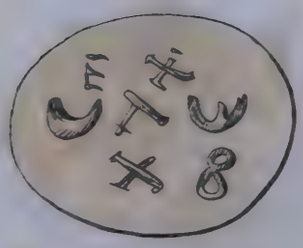

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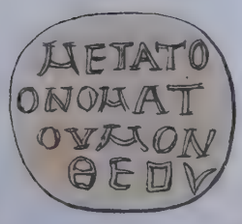

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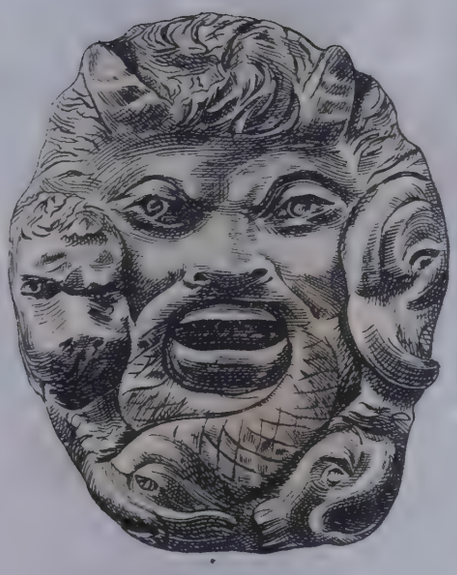

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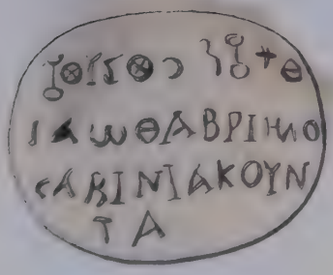

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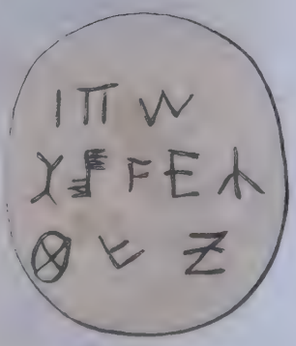

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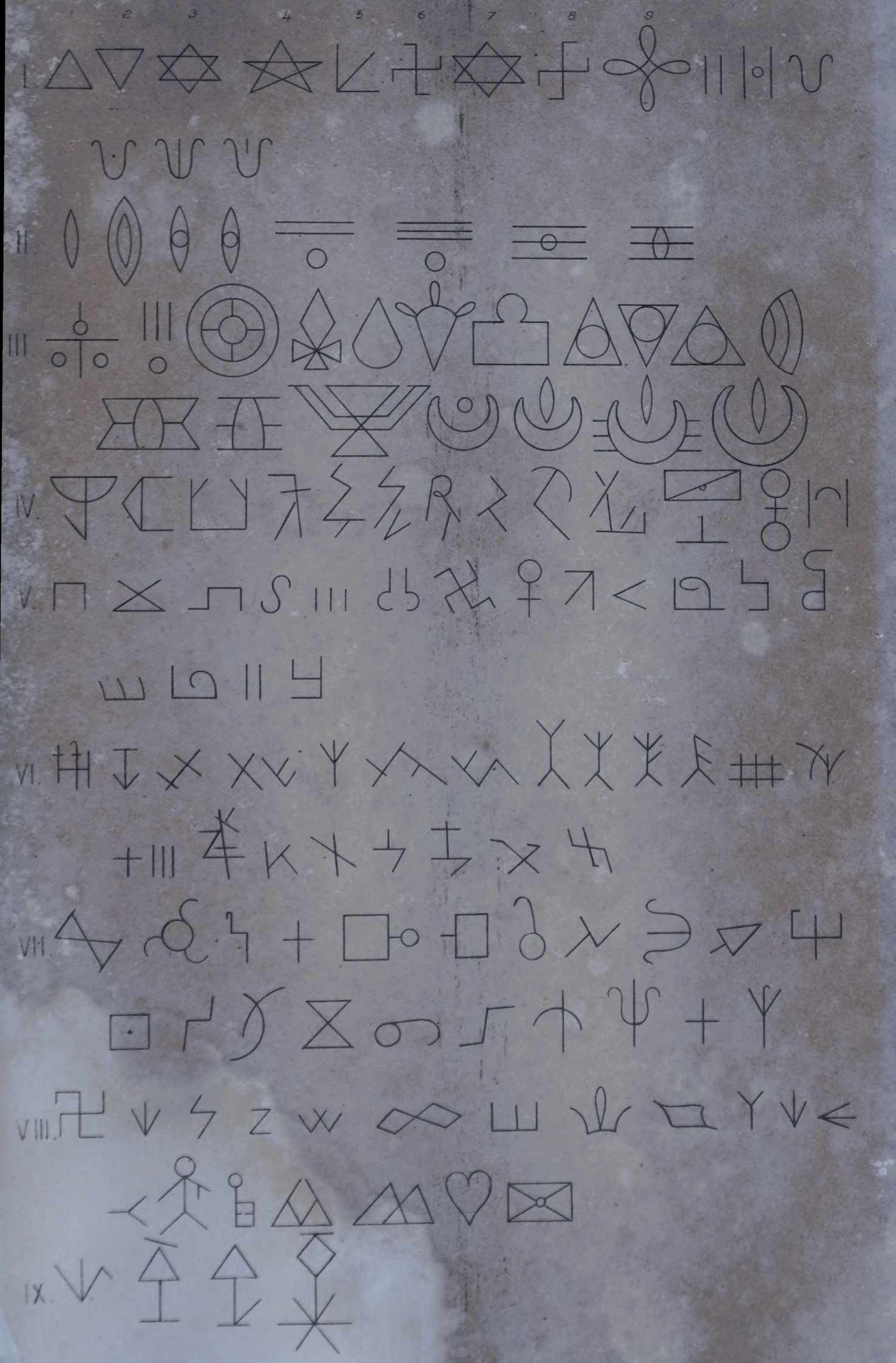
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